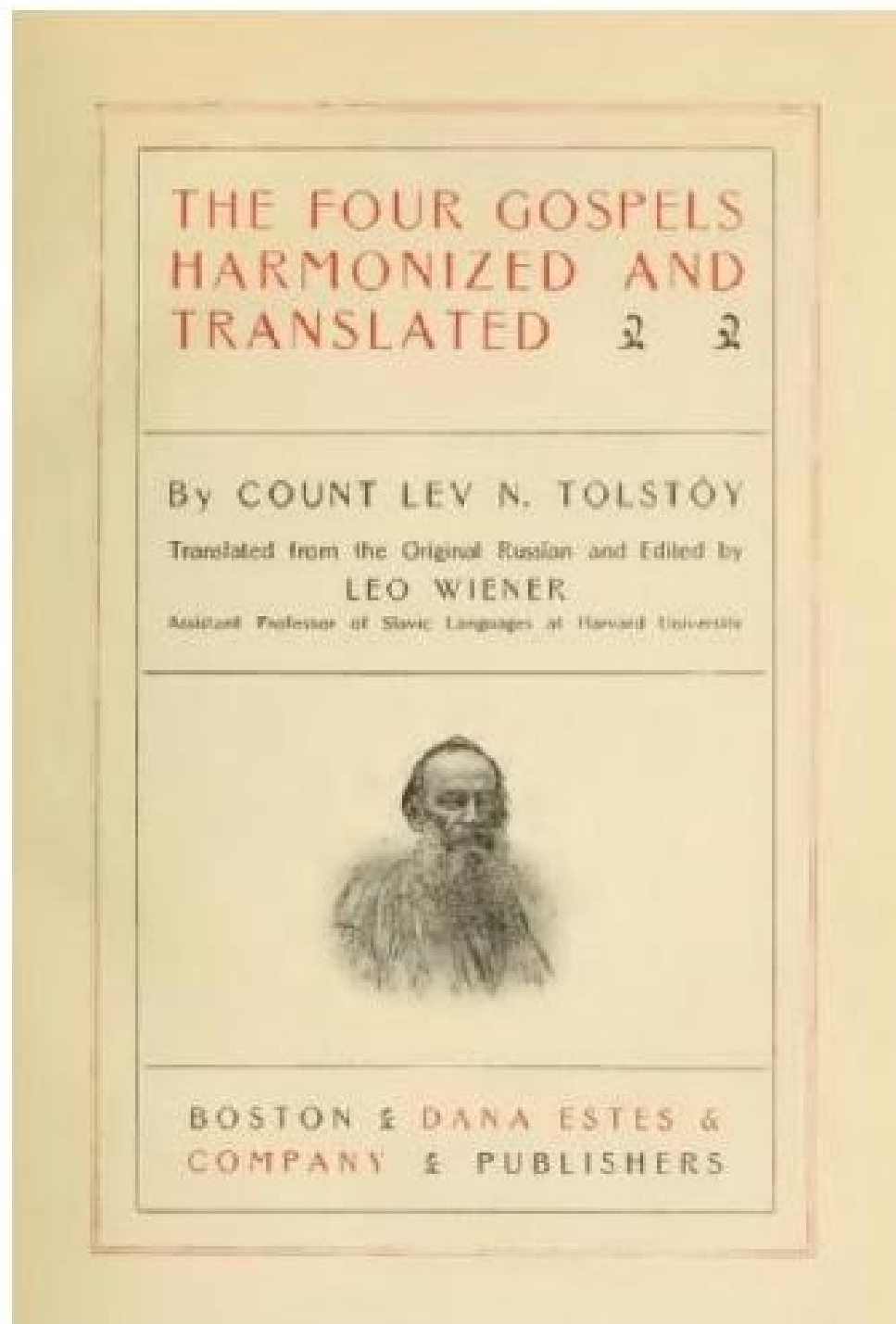
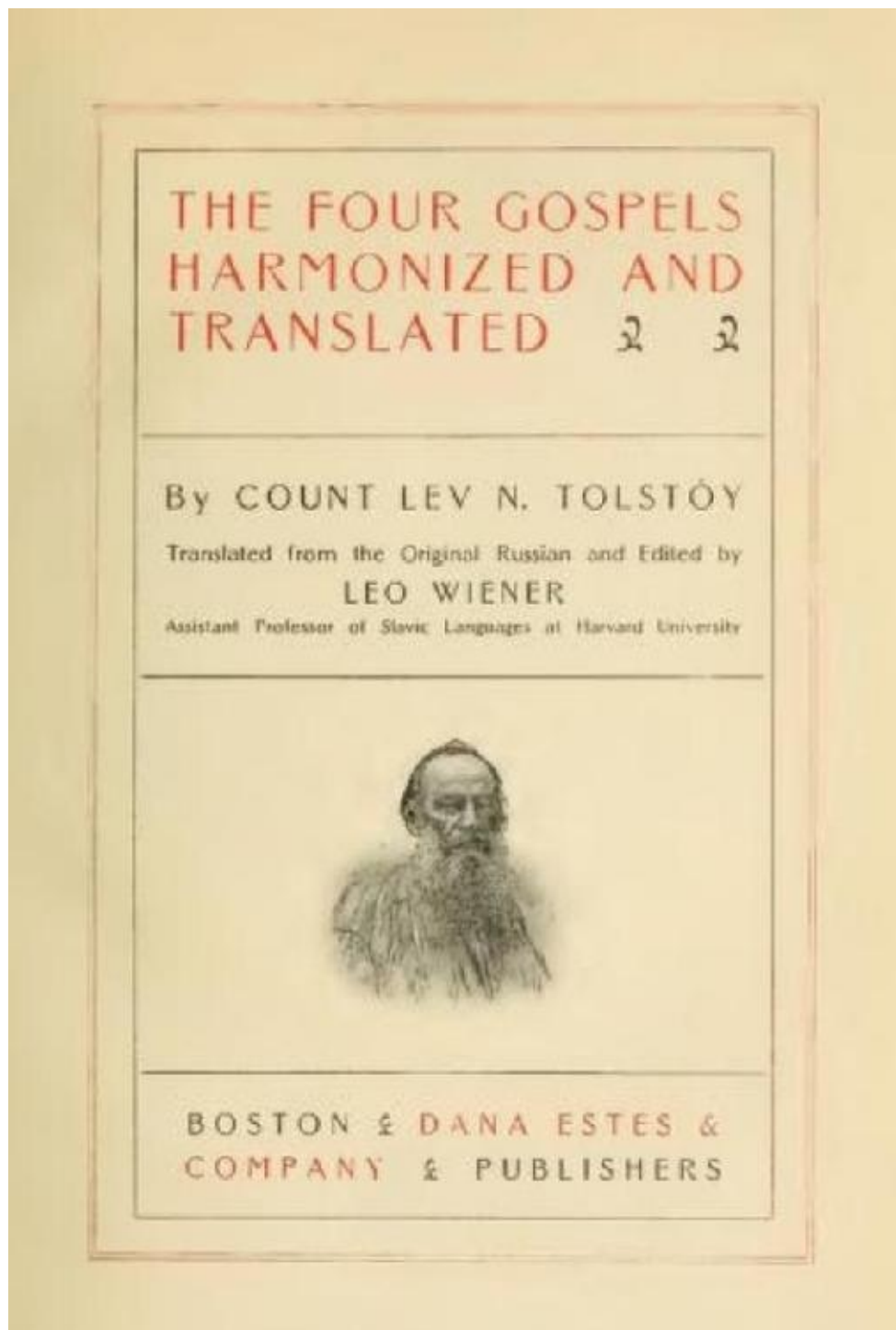


Four gospels harmonized, translated. Tolstoy's summaries.



Notice: This book is exactly Tolstoy's summaries extracted from his complete work, Chapters I-XII, here <https://archive.org/details/FourGospelsTranslationHarmonizedTolstoy/XII/Complete>



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PREFACE

Having been brought by reason without faith to despair and negation of life, I looked around at

the living humanity and convinced myself that that despair was not the common lot of men, but

that men have lived and still live by faith. I saw all about me men who had that faith and who

deduced from it a meaning of life which gave them strength to live and die quietly and joyfully. I

could not explain that meaning through reason. I tried to arrange my life like that of the believers

; I tried to blend with them, and to do all that they did in life, even as to the external worship of

God, thinking that in that way the meaning of life would be revealed to me. The more I cultivated

the acquaintance of the masses, and lived as they did, and executed all the external rites of

divine worship, the more I became conscious of two forces which had diametrically opposite

effects upon me. On the one hand, there was revealed to me a meaning of life which more and

more satisfied me, and which was not destroyed by death ; on the other hand I saw that in that

external confession of faith and worship there was much deception. I saw that the masses,

because of their ignorance, lack of leisure, and unwillingness to think, failed to see the lie, but I

could not help seeing it, and, having once beheld it, I could not shut my eyes to it, as educated

people who were believers advised me to do. The longer I lived, fulfilling the obligations of a

believer, the more did that lie startle me and demand an investigation of where that lie ended

and truth began. I no longer doubted that in the Chris-

tian teaching was the truth of life. My internal discord finally reached such a stage that I no

longer could intentionally shut my eyes, as I had done before, and was inevitably compelled to

investigate the doctrine which I wanted to make my own.

At first I asked for explanations from priests, monks, bishops, metropolitans, learned

theologians. There were explained to me all the obscure passages, and these explanations

were frequently unscrupulous, and more frequently contradictory: all of them referred to the holy

fathers, to catechisms, to theology. And I took the theological books and began to study them,

and that study led me to the conviction that the faith which our hierarchy confessed, and which it

taught the masses, was not only a lie, but also an immoral deception. In the Orthodox doctrine I

found an exposition of the most unintelligible, blasphemous, and immoral propositions, which

were not only incompatible with reason, but were also entirely incomprehensible and contrary to

morality, and not the slightest teaching about life, nor about its meaning. I could not help

noticing that the exposition of the theology was clearly directed, not to the explanation of the

meaning of life and to the teaching about life, but only to the confirmation of the most

incomprehensible and useless of propositions, and to the refutation of all those who did not

recognize those propositions. That exposition, which was directed to the refutation of other

teachings, involuntarily compelled me to turn my attention to those other creeds. These refuted

creeds proved to be of the same character as the Orthodox, which refuted them. Some are even

more stupid, others are less so, but all of them alike affirmed incomprehensible propositions

which are useless for life, and in their name deny each other and violate the union of men, —

the chief foundation of the Christian teaching.

I was brought to the conviction that there was no church at all. All the differently believing Christians call themselves true Christians and deny each other. All these separate collections of

Christians call themselves exclusively the church and assure us that their church

is the true one,

and that the others have departed from it, while it alone has remained intact. All the believers of

whatsoever denomination entirely fail to see that the church is not true because their faith has

remained such or such, but that they call it true because they were born in it or have chosen it,

and that all the others say precisely the same about their own faith. Thus it is evident that there

has never been one church, that the churches count by the thousand, and that they all deny

each other and only assert that each one of them is the true and only church. They all say one

and the same thing: Our church is the True, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Universal Church. Our

Scripture is holy. Jesus Christ is the head of our church and the Holy Ghost guides it, and it

alone comes by direct succession from Christ the God.

If we take a twig of a spreading bush, it will be quite correct to say that from twig to twig, from

twig to branch, and from branch to root, every twig is derived from the trunk, but none of them is

so exclusively. They are all alike. It will be absurd to say that every twig is the only true twig, but

that is exactly what the churches say. Indeed, there are a thousand traditions, and each denies

and curses all the others, and regards its own as the true one: Catholics,
Lutherans,

Protestants, Calvinists, Shakers, Mormons, Greek Orthodox, Old Believers, the
Popish and the

Popeless sects, Milkers, Mennonites, Baptists, Mutilators, Dukhobors, etc., etc.,
all of them

equally assert about their own faith that it is the only true one, that in it alone is
the Holy Ghost,

that its head is Christ, and that all the others are in error. There are a thousand
faiths, and each

calmly considers itself to be holy; and all of them know that, and each man who
confesses his

faith as the only true faith knows that every other faith is just as much a stick
with two ends,

regarding itself as true and all the others as heresies. It will soon be eighteen
hundred years

that this self-deception has been going on.

In worldly matters men know how to discover the most cunning of traps and not
to fall into them,

but in this deception millions have been living for eighteen hundred years,
shutting their eyes

against it, both in our European world and in America, where everything is new.
All, as though

by plotting together, repeat one and the same stupid deception: they confess each
his own

truths of faith, regarding them as the only true ones, without noticing that all the
others do

precisely the same.

More than that. Long, very long ago freethinking men have cleverly and sharply ridiculed that

human stupidity and showed to what extent it is stupid. They have clearly proved that that whole

Christian teaching, with all its ramifications, has long ago outlived its day and that the time has

come for a new faith, and some of them have even invented new faiths; but nobody listens to

them or follows them, and all believe as of old, each in his own special Christian faith: the

Catholics in their own, the Lutherans in their own, our Popish dissenters in their own, our

Popeless dissenters in their own, the Mormons in their own, the Milkers in their own, and the

Orthodox, those whom I wished to join, in their own. What does that mean ? Why do men not

give up that teaching ? There is one answer to it, and in this all the freethinking people, who

deny religion, and all men of other religions agree, and that is, that Christ's teaching is good,

and so it is dear to people and they cannot live without it. But why have men, who believe in Christ's teaching, all divided into all kinds of creeds, and why do they keep dividing more and

more, and denying and condemning each other, and why are they unable to agree on one

confession of faith ?

Again the answer is simple and obvious. The cause of the division of the Christians is precisely

this teaching about the church, a teaching which asserts that Christ has established the one,

true church, which, in its essence, is holy and infallible, and can and must teach others. If this

conception about the church did not exist, there could be no division among the Christians.

Each Christian church, that is, the creed, incontestably rises from the teaching of Christ himself,

but it is not the only one to come from it: all the other doctrines come just as much from it. They

have all grown from one seed, and what unites them, what is common among them all, is that

from which they have grown out, that is, the seed. And so, in order properly to understand the

teaching of Christ, we must not study it, as the only creed does it, from the branches to the

trunk; nor must we, as uselessly as science, the history of religion, does it, study this teaching

by starting from its foundation, by going from the trunk to the branches. Neither the one nor the

other gives us the meaning of the teaching. The meaning is given only by the knowledge of the

seed, of the fruit, from which they have all come, and for which they all live. They have all come

from the life and works of Christ, and all live only in order to reproduce the

works of Christ, that

is, the works of good. And only in these works will they all meet.

What brought me in particular to faith is the search after a meaning of life, that is, the search

after a path of life, — how to live. When I saw the works of the life of men who professed

Christ's teaching, I clung to them. Such men, who profess Christ's teaching by works, I meet

without distinction among the Orthodox, and among the dissenters of all the sects, and among

Catholics, and among Lutherans, so that obviously the general meaning of life, as given by

Christ's teaching, is not received from the creed, but from something else which is common to

all creeds. I have watched good people of more than one creed, and in all I saw the same

meaning, which is based on the teaching of Christ. In all those different sects of Christians I saw

a complete agreement in the conception of what is good, what evil, and of how one ought to

live. All these men declared this conception of theirs through the teaching of Christ. The

doctrines have multiplied, but their foundation is one; consequently, what is lying at the

foundation of all faiths is the one truth. It is this truth that I am trying to find out now. The truth of

faith is not to be found in the definite interpretations of Christ's revelation, those interpretations

which have divided the Christians into a thousand sects, but is to be found in the very first

revelation of Christ himself. And so I turned to the study of the gospels.

I know that according to the teaching of the church the meaning of the teaching is to be found

not merely in the Gospel alone, but also in the whole Scripture and Tradition, which are guarded

by the church. I assume that after everything said before, the sophistry, which consists in this,

that the Scripture which serves as the foundation for my investigation is not subject to

investigation, because the true and holy interpretation belongs exclusively to the church, that

this sophistry cannot be repeated, the more so since every interpretation is destroyed by the

contrary interpretation of another church, and because all holy churches reject one another. The

prohibition to read and comprehend the Scripture is only a sign of those sins of interpretations, which the interpreting church is conscious of in its own case.

God has revealed the truth to men. I am a man, and so am not only entitled, but also compelled,

to make use of it and stand face to face with it without any mediation. If God speaks in these

books, he knows the weakness of my mind and will speak in such a way as not to lead me into

deception. The argument of the church that the interpretation of the Scripture by individuals

must not be permitted, lest those who interpret it be led astray and the interpretations multiply

greatly, can have no meaning for me. It might have had a significance, if the interpretation of

the church were intelligible, and if there were but one church and one interpretation ; but now,

since the interpretation of the church about the Son of God and about God, about God in three

persons, about the virgin who bore a son without losing her virginity, and about the blood of God

which is eaten in the form of bread, and so forth, can find no place in my sound mind, and since

there are thousands of different interpretations, this argument, no matter how often repeated,

can have no meaning whatever. Now, on the contrary, an interpretation is needed, and it has to

be such that all could agree on it. But an agreement will only then be possible when the

interpretation is rational. All of us agree on what is rational, in spite of our differences. If this

revelation is the truth it cannot and must not fear the light of reason, if it wishes to be

convincing, and is obliged to invoke this light. If the whole revelation will turn out to be absurd,

so much the better, and God help it. God can do anything, but this: he cannot talk

nonsense.

And it would be stupid to write a revelation which cannot be understood.

I call revelation what is revealed to reason which has reached its highest limits, the

contemplation of what is divine, that is, above the reason of the standing truth. I call revelation

what gives an answer to the question, insoluble to reason, which has brought me to despair and

suicide, the question as to what meaning life has. This answer must be intelligible and must not

contradict the laws of reason, as would the assertion that an infinite quantity is even or odd. The

answer must not contradict reason, for I will not believe a contradictory answer, and so it has to

be not only intelligible and the contrary of

wilful, but also inevitable to reason, as inevitable as is the assumption of infinity to him who can

count.

The answer must reply to my question what meaning my life has. If it will not give this answer, it

is useless for me. The answer must be such that, although its essence, in relation to God, may

remain incomprehensible in itself, all the deductions of the consequences, derived from it,

should correspond to all rational demands, and that the meaning ascribed to my life should

solve all the questions of my life. The answer has to be not only rational and clear, but also true,

that is, such as I can believe in with my whole soul, inevitably, as I believe in the existence of

infinity.

Revelation cannot be based on faith, as the church understands it, as a trust in advance in what

I shall be told. Faith is the consequence of the inevitableness and truth of the revelation, which

fully satisfies reason.

Faith, according to the conception of the church, is an obligation which with threats and

enticements is imposed on the soul of man.

According to my conception, faith is this, that the foundation on which every action of reason is

reared is true. Faith is the knowledge of the revelation, without which it is impossible to live and

think. Revelation is the knowledge of what man cannot attain by reason, but what is carried

away by all humanity from what is hidden in the infinitude of the beginning of everything. Such,

in my opinion, is to be the quality of the revelation which fosters faith, and such I seek in the

Tradition about Christ, and so I turn to it with the sternest and most rational of demands.

I do not consider the Old Testament, because the question does not consist in

this, what was

the faith of the Jews, but what does the faith of Christ consist in, for there men find that meaning

which makes it possible for them to live. The Jewish books may be interesting for us as an

explanation of those forms in which Christianity has been expressed; but we cannot recognize

any consecutiveness of faith from Adam to the present, for previous to Christ the faith of the

Jews was local. The faith of the Jews is as foreign and as interesting to us as the faith of the

Brahmins. But the faith of Christ is the one we live by. To study the faith of the Jews in order to

understand the Christian religion is the same as studying a candle before lighting it in order to

understand the significance of the light which proceeds from the burning candle. All that can be

said is this, that the character and quality of the light may depend on the candle itself, just as the

form of the expressions of the New Testament may depend on its relation to Judaism; but the

light cannot be explained from the fact that it proceeds from this, rather than from that, candle.

And so the blunder made by the church, in acknowledging the Old Testament as much a

divinely inspired Scripture as the New Testament, is in the most obvious way reflected in this,

that the church recognizes this in words, but not in fact, and so has fallen into contradictions

from which it would never extricate itself, if sound reasoning were at all obligatory for it. And so I

leave out the writings of the Old Testament, the revealed Scripture which, according to the

expression of the church, is expressed in twenty-seven books. In reality, this tradition is not

expressed in twenty-seven books, nor in five, nor in 138, just as the revelation of God cannot be

expressed in a number of pages or letters.

To say that the revelation of God is expressed in 185 pages on paper, is the same as saying

that the soul of such and such a man weighs fifteen hundredweights, or the light of the lamp

measures seven bushels.

The revelation was expressed in the souls of men, and men transmitted it from one to another

and wrote a few things down. From what has been noted down, it is known that there existed

more than one hundred gospels and epistles, which were not accepted by the church. The

church selected twenty-seven books and called them canonical. It is evident that some books

expressed the tradition better, some worse, and that there is no break in the gradation. The

church had to draw a line somewhere, in order to separate what it regarded as divinely inspired.

But it is evident that no such line could sharply separate the full truth from the full lie. The

tradition is a shadow from the white to the black, or from the truth to the lie, and no matter where

the line may be drawn, the shadows would inevitably be separated where the black is. This is

precisely what the church did, when it separated the tradition and called some canonical and the

rest apocryphal. This was done remarkably well. The church chose so, well that the newest

investigations have shown that nothing is to be added. From these investigations it became

clear that what is best known and is best has been included by the church in the canonical

books.

More than that: as though to correct the inevitable error, which was due to the drawing of the

line, the church has accepted some of the traditions from the apocryphal books.

Everything which could have been done was done excellently. But in this separation the church

erred in this, that, wishing more emphatically to reject what was not received by it, and to give

more weight to what it did receive, it put one general seal of infallibility on what it accepted.

Everything is from the Holy Ghost, and every word is true. With this it ruined and harmed

everything which it received. By inevitably accepting in this strip of the tradition the white, the

bright, and the gray, that is, the more or less pure teaching, and by imposing on everything the

seal of infallibility, it deprived itself of the right to combine, exclude, elucidate what was

accepted, which, indeed, was its duty to do, and which it has never done. Everything is sacred:

the miracles, the Acts of the Apostles, Paul's advice concerning the wine, and the delirium of the

Apocalypse, and so forth, so that after the eighteen hundred years of their existence these

books lie before us in the same coarse, clumsy, absurd, contradictory form in which they have

ever been. By assuming that every word of the Scripture is sacred truth, the church tried to

combine, elucidate, solve the contradictions, and understand, and did everything which could be

done in this sense, that is, gave the greatest possible meaning to what is absurd. But the first

mistake has been fatal.

By recognizing everything as sacred truth, it was necessary to justify everything, shut the eyes,

conceal, make false deals, fall into contradictions, and, alas, frequently tell an untruth. While

accepting everything in words, the church has been compelled to reject certain books in fact.

Such are the whole of the Apocalypse and parts of the Acts, which frequently not only fail to be

instructive, but are even offensive. It is evident that Luke wrote about the miracles in order to

strengthen people in the faith, and no doubt there were some who were confirmed in their faith

by such reading, but now it is not possible to find a more blasphemous book, one which more

undermines faith. Perhaps a candle is needed where there is darkness. But if there is light,

there is no sense in illuminating it with a candle, for it will be seen without it. Christ's miracles

are the candles which are brought into the light in order to illuminate it. If there is light, it will be

seen anyway; and if there is no light, then it is only the candle which is shedding light.

And so it is impossible and unnecessary to read the twenty-seven books in succession,

recognizing each word as holy, as the church reads them, for one would only arrive at what the

church has arrived at, namely, at the negation of self. In order to comprehend the contents of

the Scripture which belongs to the Christian faith, it is necessary first to solve the question which

of the twenty-seven books that are given out as constituting Holy Scripture are

more or less

essential and important, and then to begin with those that are most important. Such

unquestionably are the four gospels. Everything which precedes them may, in a large measure,

be only historical material for the comprehension of the Gospel, and everything subsequent only

an elucidation of these books. And so it is not necessary, as the churches do, inevitably to

harmonize all the books (we are convinced that that, more than anything else, has led the

churches to preach unintelligible things), but in these four books, which, according to the

teaching of the church, expound the most essential revelation, to find the most important bases

of the teaching, without conforming with any teaching of the other books, not because I do not

wish to do so, but because I am afraid of the errors of the other books, which offer such a bright

and palpable example.

What I shall try to find in these books is this: (1) What is comprehensible to me, for no one can

believe what is incomprehensible, and the knowledge of what is incomprehensible is equal to

ignorance; (2) what answers my question as to what I am, what God is; and (3) what the one

chief basis of every revelation is. And so I am not going to read the incomprehensible, obscure,

halfintelligible passages as I want them to be, but so as to bring them most in agreement with

entirely clear passages, with which they can be reduced to one basis. By reading in this

manner, not once or twice, but many times, both the Scripture itself and what has been written

about it, I came to the conclusion that the whole Christian tradition is contained in the f our

gospels; that the books of the Old Testament can serve only as an explanation of the form

which Christ's teaching has chosen, and that they can only obscure, but in no way elucidate, the

meaning of Christ's teaching; that the epistles of John and James are teachings which were

called forth by the peculiar condition of the private elucidations, and that it is possible to find in

them at times Christ's teaching expressed from a new side, and nothing more. Unfortunately,

we frequently can find, especially in the epistles of Paul, an expression of the teaching which is

liable to fill the reader with doubts, which obscure the teaching itself. But the Acts of the

Apostles, like many of the epistles of Paul, not only have nothing in common with the Gospel

and with the epistles of John, Peter, and James, but frequently contradict them.

The Revelation

absolutely reveals nothing. But the main thing is that, no matter at what different times they

were written, the Gospel forms the exposition of the whole teaching, and everything else is only

an interpretation of it.

I read the Gospel in Greek, in the language in which we possess it, and I translated as the

sense and the dictionaries demanded, now and then departing from the translations which exist

in the modern languages and which were made when the church had comprehended and

defined the meaning of the tradition in its own way. Besides translating, I have inevitably been

led to the necessity of harmonizing the four gospels, since they all expound, though variously,

the same incidents and the same teaching. The new proposition of exegetics, that the Gospel of

John, being exclusively theological, should be discussed separately, had no meaning for me,

since my aim is not historical, nor philosophical, nor theological criticism, but the finding of the

meaning of the teaching. The meaning of the teaching is expressed in the four gospels, and so,

if all four are the exposition of one and

the same revelation of truth, then one must confirm and elucidate the rest. And

so I considered

them by uniting them, without omitting the Gospel of John.

There have been many attempts made at combining the gospels, but all those which I know,

Arnolde de Yence, Farrar, Eeuss, Grechulevich, harmonize them on a historical basis, and are

all equally unsuccessful. Not one of them is better than another in the historical sense, and all

are equally satisfactory in the sense of the teaching. I leave the historical meaning entirely

alone, and harmonize only in the sense of the teaching. The harmonization of the gospels on

this basis has this advantage, that the true teaching represents, as it were, a circle, of which all

the parts determine their mutual significance, and for the study of which it is immaterial from

what place we begin. In studying in this manner the gospels, in which the historical events of

Christ's life are so closely connected with the teaching, the historical consecutiveness appeared

quite immaterial to me, and for the historical consecutiveness it made no difference to me which

harmonization of the gospels I took as my basis. I selected two of the latest harmonizations, by

authors who made use of the labours of all their predecessors, Grechulevich and Eeuss, but

since Eeuss has separated John from the synoptics, Grechulevich's harmonization has been of

greater use to me, and I took it for the basis of my work, collating it with Reuss and departing

from both whenever the sense demanded it.

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Introduction ending.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

This announcement is written in order that men might believe that Jesus Christ is a son of God

and that, by the very faith in the same which he was, they might receive life. No one has ever

comprehended or ever will comprehend God. All we know about God, we know because we

have the comprehension, and so the true beginning of everything is the comprehension. (What

we call God is the comprehension. The comprehension is the beginning of everything, — it is

the true God.)

Nothing can exist without the comprehension. Everything has originated through the

comprehension. In the comprehension is the force of life. Even as the whole diversity of things

exists for us only because there is light, so there exists for us the whole comprehension of life,

life itself, only because there is the comprehension. The comprehension is the beginning of

everything.

In the world, life does not embrace everything. In the world, life appears as the light amidst the

darkness. The light shines so long as it shines, and the darkness does not retain the light and

remains the darkness. Even

thus in the world, life appears through death, and death does not retain life and remains death.

The source of life, the comprehension, was in the whole world and in each living man. But the

living men, living only because the comprehension was in them, did not understand that they

originated from the comprehension.

They did not understand that the comprehension gave them the possibility of blending with it,

since they were not living from the flesh, but from the comprehension. By understanding this

and believing in their sonhood to the comprehension, men could have the true life. But men did not understand that, and the life in the world was like the light in the darkness.

God, the beginning of all beginnings, no one has ever comprehended, or ever will comprehend,

but the life in the comprehension has pointed out the path to him.

And so Jesus Christ, living among us, has declared the comprehension in the flesh, in as much

as life originated from the comprehension and is of one birth with it, just as the son originates

from the father and is of one birth with him.

And looking at his life, we comprehended the complete teaching of the godliness in fact,

because, on account of his perfection, we comprehended the new godliness in

the place of the

old. The law was given by Moses, but the godliness in fact originated through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen, or ever can see, God, but the son of God in man has pointed out the

path to him.

.....

Chapter I

JESUS CHRIST'S BIRTH, CHILDHOOD, AND BEGINNING OF PREACHING

The comprehension was made incarnate in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ announced the true good

to men. But the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph;

but before they began to live together as husband and wife, Mary turned out to be with child.

Joseph was a good man and did not wish to disgrace her, so he accepted her as his wife. And

he had no relations with her until she bore her first son, whom she called Jesus. And the boy

grew and became manly and was intelligent above his years.

Here is what happened with him in his childhood. Jesus was twelve years old, when Mary went

with Joseph to Jerusalem to celebrate a holiday, and they took the boy with them. The holiday

was over, and they went home and forgot about the boy. Then they thought of him, and it

occurred to them that he might have walked off with some children, and they asked about him

along the road. The boy could not be found, and they returned to Jerusalem after him. Not until

two days later did they find him in a church, and he was sitting with the teachers

and asking

them questions and listening. And all marvelled at his intellect.

His mother saw him, and said, What hast thou done with us ? Thy father and I have been

worrying and looking for thee.

And he said to them, Where did you look for me ? Do you not know that the son must be looked

for in the house of his father ?

And they did not understand his words. They did not understand that he, knowing that he had

no carnal father, regarded God as his Father. After that Jesus lived with his mother and obeyed

her in everything, and he increased in stature and understanding, and was in favour with God

and man.

Thus he lived until he was thirty years of age. And all thought that Jesus was Joseph's son.

This is the way Jesus began to announce the good. The prophets had predicted that God was

to come into the world. Prophet Malachi had said, My messenger will come before me to

prepare the way for me.

Prophet Isaiah had said, A voice is calling to you : Prepare the way for the Lord in the

wilderness, make his path even; let there be no hollows, nor mounds, nothing high, and nothing

low. Then God will be among you and all will find their salvation.

In accordance with these words of the prophets, a new prophet, John, made his appearance in

the time of Jesus Christ. John dwelt in the prairie of Judea on the Jordan. His raiment was of

camel's hair, girded with a leathern girdle, and he fed on tree bark and on herbs. He called the

people to a new life. And they confessed their errors to him, and he bathed them in the Jordan

as a sign that their errors were corrected. He said to all, If you have observed that you shall not

escape the will of God, be renovated. And if you wish to be renovated let it be seen from your

works that you have changed. John said, Heretofore the prophets have said that God will come.

I say to you that God has already come. He said, I purify you with water, but after me the one

who is mightier than I will purify you with the spirit. When he comes he will purify you, as the

master cleans his threshing-floor: the wheat he will gather, but the chaff he will burn. If a tree

does not bring forth good fruit, it is cut down and burnt up. And the axe is already laid upon the

root of the tree.

And the people asked him, What shall we do ? He answered, He that has two coats, let him give

one to him who has none; and he who has food, let him give it to him who has none.

Farmers of taxes came to him, and asked him, What shall we do ? He said, Exact no more than

is your right.

And the soldiers asked, What shall we do ? He said, Offend no one. Do not cheat. Be satisfied

with what is given you.

And many other things he proclaimed to the people about what is the present good.

Jesus was then thirty years old. He came to the Jordan to John, and heard his preaching about

God's coming, about the necessity of being renovated, about people being purified by water,

and about their future purification by the spirit, when God would come. Jesus did not know his

carnal father and regarded God as his Father. He believed in John's preaching, and said to

himself, If it is true that God is my Father, and I am a son of God, and if what John says is true, I

need only to purify myself by the spirit that God may come to me.

And Jesus went into the wilderness to test the truth of his being a son of God, and of God's

coming to him. He went into the wilderness and there lived for a long time without food and

drink, and finally grew thin. And then doubt came over him, and he said to

himself, Thou sayest

that thou art a spirit, a son of God, and that God will come to thee, and yet thou art tormented

because thou hast no bread, and God does not come to thee: consequently thou art no spirit, no

son of God. But he said to himself, My flesh craves for bread, but not bread is needed for life:

man lives not by bread, but by the spirit, by what is from God.

But hunger kept tormenting him. And he was overcome by another doubt, and he said to

himself, Thou sayest that thou art a son of God, and that God will come to thee, and yet thou

sufferest and canst not make an end to thy sufferings. And he imagined that he was standing on

a roof of the temple, and the thought occurred to him, If I am a spirit, a son of God, I shall not be

killed if I cast myself down from the temple, but an invisible power will preserve and sustain me,

and will free me from all evil. Why should I not cast myself down, so as to cease suffering

hunger ?

But he said to himself, Why should I tempt God whether he is with me or not ? If I tempt him, I

do not believe in him and he is not with me. God the spirit gives me life, and so in life the spirit is

always within me. And I cannot tempt him. I may stop eating, but I cannot kill

myself, because I feel the spirit within me. But hunger continued to torment him.
And it occurred to him, If I must

not tempt God by casting myself down from the temple, I must not tempt him by
starving when I

want to eat. I must not deprive myself of all the appetites of the flesh. They are
given to all men.

And he imagined he saw all the kingdoms of earth and all men, as they lived and
worked for the

flesh, expecting a reward from it. And he thought, They work for the flesh, and
the flesh gives

them all which they have. If I shall work for it, the same will happen with me.
But he said to

himself, My God is not flesh, but spirit; by him I live, him I know always, him
alone I worship, for

him alone I work, and from him I expect my reward.

Then the temptation left him, and the spirit renovated him, and he knew that God
had come to

him and was always in him, and, having learned that, he returned to Galilee in
the strength of

the spirit. From that time on, having learned the power of the spirit, he began to
announce the

presence of God. He said, The time has come, renovate yourselves, believe in
the

announcement of the good.

From the wilderness Jesus went to John, and was with him.

When Jesus went away from John, John said of him, He is the true son of God

(the chosen

one). Two of John's disciples, hearing these words, left their old teacher and followed Jesus.

Jesus saw that they were walking behind him, and so he stopped, and said, What do you want ?

Teacher, we wish to be with thee and to learn thy teaching. He said, Come with me, and I will

tell you everything. They went with him, and remained with him the whole day, staying until the

tenth hour.

One of these disciples was called Andrew. And Andrew had a brother Simon. Having listened to

Jesus, Andrew went to his brother Simon, and said to him, We have found the chosen one of

God. Andrew took Simon with him, and brought him to Jesus. This brother of Andrew Jesus

called Peter, which means a stone. And these two brothers became the disciples of Jesus.

And Jesus walked on with his two disciples. After they had gone a distance, Jesus saw some

fishermen in a ship. Those were Zebedee the father with hired servants and with two sons,

James and John. They were sitting and mending their nets. Jesus began to speak with

James and with John, and James and John left their father with the hired servants in the ship

and went with Jesus and became his disciples.

Later, just before entering Galilee, Jesus met Philip, and he called him. Philip was of Bethsaida,

of the same village with Peter and Andrew. When Philip recognized Jesus, he went to find his

brother Nathanael, to whom he said, We have found the chosen one of God, of whom Moses

has written, He is Jesus, the son of Joseph, of Nazareth. Nathanael was surprised to hear that

the chosen one was from a neighbouring village, and he said, Brother, it is queer that a

messenger of God should come from Nazareth. Philip said, Come with me to him, and thou

shalt see and hear for thyself. Nathanael agreed to it and went with his brother and met Jesus.

When he heard him, he said to him, Yes, now I see that it is true that thou art the son of God

and the King of Israel

Jesus said to him, Thou wilt learn what is more important than this. Thou wilt learn that the

kingdom of God has come, and so I tell you truly that the divine power will descend to all men,

and from them will emanate the divine power. From now on God will no longer be separate from

men, but men will blend with God.

And from the wilderness Jesus went to his home in Nazareth. And on a holiday

he went, as

usual, into an assembly and began to read. And they gave him the book of the prophet Isaiah.

He unrolled it and began to read. In the book it was written, The spirit of the Lord is in me: he

has chosen me to announce the good to the unfortunate and the broken-hearted, to proclaim

freedom, light to the blind, and salvation and rest to the weary, to announce to all the time of the

salvation, of God's mercy. He closed the book and gave it to the servant, and sat down, and al

waited to hear what he would say. And he said, Now is the Scripture fulfilled in your eyes. God

is in the world. The kingdom of God has come, and all the unfortunate, the broken-hearted, the

blind, the weary, — all shall receive salvation.

And many wondered at the goodness of his speech. And some said, But he is a carpenter and

the son of a carpenter. And his mother is called Mariam, and his brothers, James, Simon,

Judas, and Joses, and we know them all: they are as poor as we are. And he said to them, No

doubt you think that because I say that there are no longer any unfortunate and weary, and I

have a poor father and mother and brothers, I am telling an untruth, and that I ought to make

them happy. If you think so, you do not understand what I am saying. And thus, a prophet is

never understood in his own country.

And Jesus went to Capernaum, and on a Sabbath entered an assembly and began to teach.

And all the people marvelled at his teaching, because his teaching was quite different from the

teaching of the scribes. The scribes taught the law, which must be obeyed, and Jesus taught

that all men were free.

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CHAPTER II.

GENERAL REMARK. THE NEW WORSHIP IN THE SPIRIT BY WORKS. THE REJECTION OF

THE JEWISH GOD

THIS second chapter contains a negative definition of God. John said, When you are purified by

the spirit, God will be in the world. Jesus went into the wilderness, recognized the power of the

spirit, returned to the world, and announced that God was in the world and his kingdom had

come.

The meaning of the kingdom of God in the world Jesus expressed with the words of the prophet

Isaiah. The kingdom of God is happiness for the unfortunate, salvation for the sufferers, light for

the blind, freedom for those who are not free. Jesus told his disciples that the kingdom of God

consisted in this, that henceforth God would no longer be that inaccessible God that he had

been heretofore, but that he would be in the world and in communion with men; if God is in the

world and in communion with men, what kind of a God is he ? Is he God the Creator who sits in

heaven, who had appeared to the patriarchs, and who had given the law to Moses, the

revengeful, cruel, and terrible God whom men knew and worshipped, or another God ?

In this chapter Jesus defines what God is not. In order that this may become clear, it is

necessary to reestablish the real significance of the discourses of Jesus Christ, a significance

which all the churches have carefully obscured. The significance of the words and actions of

Jesus Christ, as adduced in this chanter, is this, that Jesus Christ

denies the whole, absolutely the whole Jewish faith. In reality this is so clear and

unquestionable that one feels ashamed to have to prove it. It was necessary for our churches to

succumb to that terrible historical fate, which contrary to common sense compelled them to

combine into one the non-harmonizing, absolutely opposed teachings, the Christian and the

Jewish, to permit them to affirm such an absurdity and to conceal what is manifest.

It is enough, not to read through, but only to run through the Pentateuch, in which all the actions

of man are determined in tens of thousands of most varied circumstances, down to the minutest

details, in order to see clearly that with such a detailed, petty definition of man's actions there

can be no place for any continuation or completion of the teaching of the law, as the churches

assert. There might be room left for some new law, if it were said that all the laws were human.

But no, it says clearly and definitely that all this, as to how and when to cut off, or not to cut off,

pimples of the extreme flesh, as to how and when to kill all the women and children, as to what

people are to be reimbursed, and in what manner, for an ox accidentally killed, it says clearly

that all these are the words of God himself. How can such a law be enlarged ? Such a law can

be enlarged only by new details about pimples of the extreme flesh, about who else may be

killed, and so forth. But, by accepting this law as inspired by God, it is by that very fact

impossible to preach the doctrine of Christ, or even any other teaching, however insignificant it

may be. Everything is determined, and there is nothing to preach about.

For the first word of any sermon with the Pentateuch in view, it is necessary to destroy the

Pentateuch, the law of the Pentateuch. And yet the church had to convince itself and others that

the Pentateuch and the Gospel were both from God. What, then, could it do but close its eyes to

what was manifest and strain all the powers of

the glibness of mind in order to unite what cannot be united ? That was done in consequence of

Paul's false teaching, which preceded the knowledge of Christ's teaching, and by which the il -

understood teaching of Christ was represented as a continuation of the teaching of the Jews.

But when this took place and the problem was no longer in the comprehension of the meaning

of Christ's teaching, but in uniting what cannot be united, there was nothing left to do but look

for subterfuges and utter those misty, incoherent, flowery discourses, such as Paul's Epistle to

the Hebrews, and all that rigmarole of the same character which for eighteen hundred years has

been preached by the so-called fathers of the church and the theologians. Indeed, we may as

well imagine that men have proposed to themselves to harmonize Volume X. of the Code of

laws and the works, say, of Proudhon, regarding both works as true to the very last line. I have

selected Volume X. and Proudhon, but these works can much more easily be harmonized than

the Pentateuch and the Gospel. Indeed, let us take anything we please:

In the Gospel we are prohibited not only from killing any one but even from bearing any one any

ill-will; in the Pentateuch: Kill, kill, kill women, children, and cattle.

In the Gospel wealth is an evil; in the Pentateuch it is the highest good and a reward.

In the Gospel bodily purity consists in having but one wife; in the Pentateuch, Take as many

wives as you please.

In the Gospel all men are brothers; in the Pentateuch, all are enemies, except the Jews.

In the Gospel there is no external divine worship; in the Pentateuch, the greater half of the

books defines the details of the external ministration of God.

And this teaching of the Gospel, we are assured, is an enlargement and continuation of the

Pentateuch.

In another place we shal speak of the lie and the inevitably false comprehension of Christ's teaching, which result from this absurd assertion in regard to other passages of the Gospel; now

we are concerned with the external divine worship, against which Jesus contended.

According to the interpretations of the church all those' passages which are put down in Chapter

II., the rejection of the ablutions, of the non-communion with , those who are not cleansed, of

everything considered impure, the rejection of the fasts, the rejection of the most important

covenant of the Jews with God, of the Sabbath, the rejection of all sacrifices, of the necessity of

the hand-worked temple, the rejection even of the city most precious to the Jews, of Jerusalem,

and finally the rejection of God himself as something external, and the recognition of God as a

spirit, who must be served in the spirit, — all that, according to the interpretations of the church

is some unnecessary, superfluous finesses invented by some Pharisees.

In the first place, if all that is merely a verbal contest' with the Pharisees, it is superfluous; in the

second, to every man who knows how to read and who reads the Pentateuch, and who can

reason with his own mind, the assertion that Jesus contended with the Pharisees, and not with

the law of Moses, becomes obviously false.

Jesus was contending against all the laws of the Pentateuch, with the exception, of course, of

some truths, which could not help but be in that mass of monstrous and absurd things. Thus he

understood the command to love one's father and mother, and one's neighbours. But the fact

that the Pentateuch contained two or three sentences which Jesus could accept does not prove

that he enlarged and continued it, just as nothing is proved by the fact that a man, in contending

with another, uses a few of his antagonist's words in order to confirm his proofs. Jesus did not

contend with the Pharisees, but with the whole law, and in his rejections of the external divine

worship he took up

everything which formed a dogma of faith of the external divine worship for every adult Jew.

This is the way the divine worship of the Jews was defined according to Deuteronomy:

On Purification. Lev. xvii. 7. And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom

they have gone a whoring: This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their

generations.

8. And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the

strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt-offering or sacrifice,

9. And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the

Lord; even that man shall be cut off from among his people.

Num. xix. 13. Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not

himself, defileth the tabernacle of the Lord ; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel: because

the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is yet

upon him.

14. This is the law, when a man dieth in a tent: all that come into the tent, and all that is in the

tent shall be unclean seven days.

15. And every open vessel which hath no covering bound upon it, is unclean.

16. And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with the sword in the open fields, or a dead

body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

17. And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for

sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel:

18. And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a

bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave:

19. And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh

day: and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in

water, and shall be clean at even.

20. But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off

from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the Lord:
the water of

separation hath not been sprinkled upon him ; he is unclean.

21. And it shall be a perpetual statute unto them, that he that sprinkleth the water
of

separation shall wash his clothes ; and he that toucheth the water of separation
shall be unclean

until even.

22. And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean ; and the soul
that toucheth

it shall be unclean until even.

On Fasting. Lev. xvi. 29. And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the
seventh month,

on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all,
whether it be one

of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:

Lev. xxiii. 27. Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of
atonement; it

shall be an holy convocation unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer
an offering made

by fire unto the Lord.

On the Sabbath. Exod-. xxxi. 13. Speak thou also unto the children of Israel,
saying, Verily my

sabbaths ye shall keep : for it is a sign between me and you throughout your
generations; that

ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.

It is not worth while to quote passages in reference to the sacrifices, since a good part of the

Pentateuch is filled with definite decrees by God himself as to what kind of sacrifices are to be

brought to him.

The same may be said about Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a city of God. God lives there. That God

is not a spirit, but an external being with arms, eyes, and legs, is to be seen from all passages

where only God is mentioned. And so, rejecting the purification, and the fasts, and the Sabbath,

and the sacrifices, and the temple, and the carnal God, Jesus did not continue the faith of

Moses, but denied everything to the root.

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Chapter II ending.

THE NEW WORSHIP IN THE SPIRIT BY WORKS.

THE REJECTION OF THE JEWISH GOD

And Jesus showed to all people that the former worship was a he, and that God ought to be

served by works and by compassion toward men.

He happened on a Sabbath to walk with his disciples across a field. On their way the disciples

plucked some ears of corn, and rubbed them in their hands, and ate them.

The Pharisees, the Orthodox, saw that, and said, It is not proper to do that on a

Sabbath. It is

not lawful to work on a Sabbath, but you rub the ears. Jesus heard that, and said to them, If you

understood what is meant by the words said by God to the prophet, I rejoice in the love of men among themselves, and not in the sacrifices which they bring me, you would not be condemning

the innocent. The Sabbath has not been established by God, but by man, consequently man is

more important than the Sabbath.

It happened another time on a Sabbath that, as Jesus was teaching in an assembly, a sick

woman went up to him and asked him to help her.

And Jesus began to treat her. Then a lawyer, an elder of the assembly, grew angry at Jesus for

it and said to the people, In the law of God it is written, Six days in the week are for work, but on

the Sabbath God has not

done; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, -when they had heard what great things

he did, came unto him.

and from Idumea, and from Jerusalem, and from beyond the

Jordan, and people from Tyre and Sidon.

Matt. ix. 35. And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and

preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

35. And he went about the cities and villages

proclaiming in the assemblies the announcement about the true good of the kingdom of heaven.

permitted men to work. Thereupon Jesus asked the lawyers and the Pharisees, Is it according

to you not permitted to aid a man on a Sabbath ?

And they did not know what to say.

Then Jesus said, Does not each one of you untie the cattle from the stall and take them to drink

on a Sabbath ? Or if one of your sheep should fall into a well, would you not run quickly to pull it

out on a Sabbath ? And is not a man much better than a sheep ? What, then, according to you,

is a man to do on a Sabbath, good or evil ? To save the soul or to let it perish ? One must

always do good, even on a Sabbath.

Pharisees and lawyers came to Jesus from Jerusalem. And they saw that his disciples and he

himself were eating bread together, with unwashed hands. And the scribes began to condemn

them, because they themselves lived strictly as of old, washing their vessels, and without

washing them they would not eat. Nor would they eat upon returning from the market, unless

they first washed their hands.

And the lawyers asked him, Why do you not live according to the old customs,

and why do you

take and eat bread with unwashed hands ? And he said to them, Well has the prophet Isaiah

said of you. God had said to him, Because these people cling to me only with words, and

worship me only with their mouths, while their hearts are far from me, and because their fear of

me is only a human command, which they have learned by heart, I will make a wonderful,

unusual work over this people. The wisdom of their wise men shall disappear, and the reason of

their thinking men shall be obscured. Woe to them who bestir themselves to conceal their

desires from the Eternal One, and who do their works in the dark. Even so you omit that which

is important in the law, that which is the commandment of God, and observe your own

commandments, which is, to wash the

cups. Moses said to you, Honour your father and your mother, and who will not honour his

father or mother shall be put to death, but you have invented what any one may say, I give to

God what my parents have given, and fail to provide for your father or mother. Thus you destroy

the commandments of God by human enactments. You do many such things.

And Jesus called all the people, and said, Listen all, and understand, There is

nothing in the world which, going into man, can defile him, but that which comes out of him will defile a man.

Let there be love and mercy in thy heart, and then all will be pure. Try to understand that.

And when he returned home, his disciples asked him what those words meant. And he said,

Have you really not comprehended them ? Do you not understand that nothing external and

carnal can defile a man, because it enters not his soul, but his belly. It enters the belly, and with

the excrements comes out of the back. Only that can defile a man which comes out of his soul,

for from a man's soul come: fornication, lust, murder, theft, selfishness, malice, cheating,

impudence, envy, pride, and every foolishness. All that evil comes out of the soul, and this alone

can defile a man.

Jesus teaches the people that a new life has begun and that God is in the world upon earth, and

this he tells everybody, and he tells his disciples that between man and God there is always a

communion. This he teaches to all. And all are delighted with his teaching, because he teaches

differently from the lawyers. The lawyers teach men that they must obey the laws of God, but he

teaches them that they are free.

After that the passover came, and Jesus went to Jerusalem, where he entered the temple.

In the hall of the temple there were cattle, cows, oxen, and sheep, and baskets with doves, and

behind counters

sat changers with money. All that was necessary for the offerings to God. The animals were

killed and sacrificed in the temple, and the money was offered there. In that consisted the

prayers of the Jews.

Jesus entered the temple, plaited a whip, and drove all the cattle out of the hall, and let out all

the doves, and scattered all the money.

And he commanded that no one should carry those things into the temple. He said, the prophet

Isaiah has said, the house of God is not the temple in Jerusalem, but the whole world of God's

people. And the prophet Jeremiah has also said to you, Do not believe the lying words that here

is the house of the Eternal One, the house of the Eternal One, the house of the Eternal One. Do

not believe that, but mend your life, do not judge falsely, do not oppress the stranger, the widow,

and the orphan, do not spill innocent blood, and do not come into the house of the name of God,

and do not say, Now we can calmly commit evil things. Do not make of my

house a den of

robbers.

And the Jews began to dispute, and they said to him, If thou prohibitest our prayer and our

image of God, what kind of prayer wilt thou give ?

And turning to them, Jesus said, Abandon this temple, and in three days I will call to life a new,

a living temple to God.

And the Jews said, How canst thou make at once a new temple, since it took forty-six years to

build this one ?

And Jesus said, I am speaking to you about what is more important than the temple. You would

not be speaking thus, if you understood the words of the prophet, I, God, do not rejoice in your

sacrifices, but in your love among yourselves. The living temple is the whole world of the men of

God, when they love each other.

And then many people in Jerusalem believed in what he spoke.

But he himself did not believe in anything external, because he knew everything which was in

man.

He did not need to have any one to teach him about man, for he knew that the spirit of God was in man.

And the lawyers and the elders heard all that and sought how they might work

his ruin, but they

were afraid of him because all the people marvelled at his teaching.

And Jesus went again from Judea to Galilee. And it happened that he had to pass through

Samaria. He was going past a Samaritan village, Sychar by name, near the place which Jacob

had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from his journey, and he

sat down near the well; but his disciples went to the town to buy bread.

And there comes a woman from Sychar to fetch water. Jesus asks her to give him to drink.

She says to him, How is it thou askest me to give thee to drink? You Jews do not have dealings

with us Samaritans.

And he says to her, If thou knewest me and knewest what it is I teach, thou wouldst not say that,

but wouldst give me to drink, and I, too, would give thee living water. He who drinks of this water

will want to drink again, but he who drinks of my water will be satisfied for ever, and this water of

mine will lead him to life eternal.

The woman understood that he was speaking of divine things, and said to him, I saw that thou

art a prophet and want to teach me; but how canst thou teach me divine things since thou art a

Jew, and I a Samaritan ? Our people pray to God in this mountain, and you Jews

say that it is

necessary to pray in Jerusalem. Thou canst not teach me divine things, because you have one

God, and we another.

Then Jesus said to her, Believe me, woman, the time is near when neither in this mountain nor

at Jerusalem will they pray to the Father. You pray to him whom you do not know, but we pray

to the Father whom it is impossible not to know.

And the time has arrived and is already here when the true worshippers of God will worship the

Father in the spirit and with deeds. The Father needs such worshippers. God is spirit, and he

ought to be worshipped in spirit and with deeds.

The woman did not make out what he was telling her, and she said, I have heard that a

messenger of God will come, the one who is called the anointed. He will tell everything.

And Jesus said to her, I who am talking with thee am he. Wait for nothing else.

After that Jesus came into the land of Judea, and there he lived with his disciples, and purified.

At that time John purified men near Salim in the river Enon, for John had not yet been cast into

prison.

And there arose a dispute between the disciples of John and those of Jesus as to which was

better, John's purification in water, or the teaching of Jesus.

And they came to John, and said to him, Now thou purifiest with water, but Jesus teaches only,

and all men go to him. What dost thou say about it ?

And John said, A man cannot teach of himself, if God does not instruct him. Whoever speaks of

earth is earthly; and whoever speaks from God, is from God.

It is impossible to prove in any way whether words that are spoken are from God or not from

God. God is spirit. He cannot be measured nor proved. He who understands the words of God

by that proves that he has comprehended God.

At one time Jesus saw a farmer of taxes collecting taxes. His name was Matthew. Jesus spoke

with him, and Matthew understood him and liked his teaching and invited him to his house, and

entertained him.

When Jesus came to Matthew, there came also Matthew's friends, tax-collectors and corrupt

people. Jesus did not loathe them, but sat down himself with his disciples. And the lawyers and

Pharisees saw that and said to the disciples of Jesus, How is it your teacher is feasting with tax-

collectors and corrupt men ? Jesus heard that, and said, He who boasts of being well does not

need a physician, but he who is sick needs one. For this reason I do not wish to

convert those

who regard themselves as just, thinking that they are living in the truth, but teach those who

think that they are living in sin.

While he was sitting in Matthew's house, there came a city woman, who was a whore. She had

heard that Jesus was in Matthew's house, and came thither, and brought a vial with perfume.

And she knelt down at his feet, and wept, and washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them

with her hair, and poured the perfume out of the vial upon them.

Matthew saw that, and thought, He is hardly a prophet; if he were really a prophet, he would

know what manner of woman is washing his feet; he would know that she is a whore, and would

not permit her to touch him.

Jesus divined it, and turned around to Matthew, and said, Matthew, shall I tell thee what I think ?

Tell me, he said.

And Jesus said, Listen. Two men considered themselves debtors of the same master: one to

the amount of five hundred pence, and the other of fifty. And neither the one nor the other had

any money to pay his debt. The master forgave both. Well, according to thy judgment, which of

them will love the master and tend on him ?

And Matthew said, of course, the one who owes most.

Jesus pointed to the woman, and said, Even thus it is with this woman. Thou considerest thyself

a small debtor. I came to thy house, and thou didst not give me water with which to wash my

feet, while she washes them with her tears and dries them with her hair.

Thou didst not kiss me, but she kisses my feet. Thou didst not give me oil with which to anoint

my head, but she is rubbing costly ointments on my feet. He who thinks that he has nothing to

be forgiven does not love. He who thinks that he is very guilty loves much. But for love

everything is forgiven.

And he said to her, Thy sins are forgiven thee. And Jesus said, the whole thing is what each

considers himself to be. He who considers himself to be good will not be good, and who

considers himself bad is good.

Two men once came to the temple to pray, one of them a Pharisee, the other an infidel.

The Pharisee prayed like this, I thank thee, O Lord, that I am not as other men are, neither

stingy, nor a cheat, nor a debauchee, nor such a worthless man as this tax-collector. I fast twice

a week, and of my possessions I give away a tithe.

But the infidel stood at a distance and did not dare to look up to heaven, and only

struck his

breast with his hands, and kept saying, O Lord, look down upon me, worthless man !

Well ? The infidel was forgiven more than the Pharisee, because whoever exalts himself shall

he humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

After that John's disciples came to Jesus, and said, Why do we and the lawyers fast much,

while thou and thy disciples do not fast? And Jesus said to them, As long as the bridegroom is

at the wedding no man mourns. Only when the bridegroom is not there do they mourn. If there

is life there is no need of mourning.

And Jesus said also this, No one tears off a piece of a new garment to sew it on an old garment, for the new garment will be torn and the old one will not be mended. So we cannot accept your

fasts. And we cannot pour new wine into old bottles, for the bottles will be torn, and the wine will

run out. New wine has to be put in new bottles, and then both will be preserved.

And after that a Pharisee came to him, and called him to lunch at his house. He went in and sat

down at the table. The Pharisee observed that he did not wash before lunch, and was surprised.

Jesus said to him, Pharisees, you wash all the time from without, but are you clean from within ?

Be merciful to men, and everything will be clean.

And the fame spread about Jesus, and he was respected by all, so that the people kept him that

he might not go away from them. But he said that he came to announce the good not only to

one city, but to all men. And he went on to the sea.

And a large multitude followed him from various cities. And he helped all. And he walked

through cities and villages, everywhere announcing the kingdom of heaven and freeing men

from all sufferings and vices.

Thus in Jesus Christ were fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah, namely, that the people who had

lived in darkness, in the darkness of death, saw the light; that he who received this light of truth

will do no violence and no harm to men; that he is meek and humble; that, in order to bring truth

to men in the world, he does not dispute and cry; that his loud voice is not heard; that he will not

break a straw and will not blow out a night candle, and that the whole hope of men is in him.

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Chapter III end.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Jesus announces that the kingdom of God has come, and yet no visible change has taken

place. He announces to his disciples that from now on heaven is open, and

between heaven

and men there is a constant communion. He announces that it is not necessary to separate

ourselves from corrupt people, that they are not guilty, and that those only are guilty who think

that they are good because they execute the law of God.

He announces that no external purification is needed, that only that which comes from within

can defile, and that only the spirit purifies.

He announces that it is not necessary to observe the Sabbath, that this observance is foolish

and false, and that the Sabbath is a human institution.

He announces that not only are fasts useless, but that nil the old external rites are harmful for

his teaching.

Finally, he announces that it is not right to serve God with sacrifices. We do not need oxen, nor

sheep, nor doves, nor money, not even the temple itself; that there is a spirit; that the spirit does

not want sacrifices, but love ; and that the spirit is to be served — by all, always, at all times —

in the spirit and with deeds.

When the Pharisees saw and heard all that, they came to Jesus and began to ask him how he

preached the kingdom of God, since he rejected God. And he answered them, The kingdom of

God, as I preach it, is not the same as what the former prophets preached about.
They said that

God will come with all kinds of manifestations, but I say that the kingdom of
God is such that its coming cannot be seen.

And if you are told that it has come or is coming, or that it is here, you do not
believe. The

kingdom of God is not in time and not in any place; it is like lightning, — here
and there and

everywhere, and it has no time and no place, because here it is, within you.

After that a Pharisee, a Jewish elder, Nicodemus, came to Jesus in secret, and
said to him,

Thou teachest that the kingdom of God has come, and that it is within us, and yet
thou dost not

order men to fast and to offer sacrifices, but destroyest the temple; so what kind
of a kingdom of

God is yours, and where is it ?

And Jesus answered him, Thou must understand that if a man is begotten by God
the Father,

he sees the kingdom of God. Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus told him,
that every

man was already begotten by God, and said, How can a man, if he is begotten
from the flesh of

the father and has grown old, again creep into the womb of his mother and again
be begotten

by the flesh by God ?

And Jesus answered him, Understand what I say, I say that man, besides the

flesh, is begotten

by the spirit, and so each man is of flesh and of the spirit, and so each man can enter the

kingdom of God. Of the flesh is flesh. Of the flesh can not the spirit be born; only of the spirit can

there be the spirit The spirit is that which lives in thee, and it lives freely and rationally, and it is

that for which thou knowest neither beginning nor end. And every man feels it in himself. And so

why dost thou wonder when I tell thee that we must be begotten from heaven by God, by the

spirit ?

Nicodemus said, Still I do not believe that that could be possible.

Then Jesus said to him, What teacher art thou if thou dost not understand that ? Thou must

understand that

I am not talking of any recondite things; I am talking of what we all know; I assure men of what

we all see. How wilt thou believe in what is in heaven, if thou dost not believe in what is on

earth, in thyself ? No one has been in heaven, but there is on earth in man the son of God, the

spirit, the one which is God.

The very son of God in man must be worshipped, as you worshipped God, when Moses in the

wilderness exalted not the flesh of the serpent, but its image, and that image

became the

salvation of men. Even so we must exalt the son of God in man, not the flesh of man, but the

son of God in man, in order that men, relying upon it, may not know death, but shall have non-

temporal life in the kingdom of God.

Not for the ruin, but for the good of the world has God given his son, who is like himself. He

gave him for this, that every man, relying upon him, might not perish, but might have noji-

temporal life. He did not bring his son, life, into the world of men, in order to destroy men, but

that the world of men might live by it and be in the kingdom of God.

And he who relies on God is in the kingdom of God, in the power of God; and he who does not

depend on him destroys himself, by not relying on that which is life. Destruction consists in this,

that life came into the world, but men themselves walk away from life. Life is the light of men.

The light came into the world, but men prefer darkness to light, and do not walk toward the light.

The light is the comprehension, and so he who does evil evades the light, the comprehension,

that his deeds may not be seen, and remains in the power of God.

In his remarks to the Pharisees and discourse with Nicodemus Jesus explains what he means

by the kingdom of God and by God.

God and the kingdom of God are in men. God is the non-carnal principle which gives life to

man. This noncarnal principle he calls the son of God in man, the son of man. The son of man is

the comprehension. It has to be exalted and deified, and by it we must live. He who lives in the

comprehension lives non-temporally; he who does not live in it does not live, — he perishes.

What, then, is this God the Father, who is not the creator of everything and not separate from

the world, as the Jews understood him to be ? How are we to understand this Father, whose

son is in man, and how are we to understand his relation to men ?

To this Jesus replies in parables.

The kingdom of God is not to be understood as you think, namely, that for all men the kingdom

of God will come in some one place and at some certain time, but that in the whole world there

are always some people who rely upon God, who become the sons of the kingdom, and others,

who do not rely upon him, who are destroyed.

God the spirit, the Father of that spirit which is in man, is God and the Father of those only who

recognize themselves as his sons. And so only those exist for God who have retained within

them what he has given them.

And Jesus began to talk to them about the kingdom of God, and he explained it by examples.

He said, God the Father sows in the world the life of the comprehension, just as the farmer

sows his seeds in his field. He sows in the whole field, without paying any attention to where

each seed will fall.

And some seeds fall by the wayside and the birds come and pick them. And other seeds fall on

the stones, where they grow indeed, but soon wither, because they cannot take root. And others

again fall into the thorns, and the thorns choke the wheat, and the ears will grow, but will not fill

up. And others again fall in good ground, and these spring up and make up for the lost seeds

and grow full in the ears, and some ears give a hundredfold, and some sixty and some thirty.

Just so God has scattered the comprehension among men. In some it is lost, and in others it

bears a hundredfold, and they form the kingdom of God.

Thus the kingdom of God is not such as you imagine it to be, namely, that God is ruling over

you. God is only the comprehension, and the kingdom of God will be in those who will take it.

But God does not govern men.

As the farmer casts the seeds into the ground and does not think of them, but the seeds swell

and sprout themselves, and grow into blades and ears, and fill up, and the master sends the

reapers to cut them down, when they are ripe; so also has God given his son, the

comprehension, to the world, and the comprehension grows of itself in the world, and the sons

of the comprehension form the kingdom of God.

As a woman puts the leaven into the trough and mixes it with the flour, and does not mix it any

more, but waits for it to leaven of itself and rise ; so God does not enter into the life of men, as

long as they live. God gave the comprehension to the world, and the comprehension lives itself

among men and forms the kingdom of God. God the spirit is the God of life and good, and so

there are no death and no evil for him. Death and evil are for men, and not for God.

The kingdom of heaven may be compared with this: a farmer has sowed good seed in his field.

The farmer is the spirit of God; the field is the world; and the seeds are the sons of the kingdom

of God.

The farmer lies down to sleep, and the enemy comes and sows tares. The enemy is temptation;

the tares are the sons of the temptation. And now the servants come to the farmer

and say,

Hast thou sowed bad seed ? Many tares have sprung up in thy field. Send us to weed them out.

But the farmer says, It is not necessary, for when you weed out the tares you will tramp down

the wheat. Let them grow together; when the harvest comes, I will tell the reapers to pick out the

tares and will have them burned, and the wheat I will gather in my barn.

The harvest is the end of human life, and the reapers are the power of God. And as the tares

will be burned and the wheat will be cleaned and garnered, even so at the end of life everything

will perish which was the deception of time, and there will be left only the true life in the spirit.

For God there is no evil. God preserves that which he needs, which is his own; and what is not

his does not exist for him.

The kingdom of heaven is like a drawnet. The net is cast out in the sea and brings up all kinds

of fish. Then, when the drawnet is pulled out, the spoiled fish are taken out and cast into the

sea. Even so it will be at the end of time. The power of God will pick out the good, and the bad

will be rejected.

And when he finished speaking, his disciples began to ask him how these parables were to be

understood.

And he said to them, These parables have to be understood in two ways. All these parables I

speak because there are some, like you, my disciples, who understand what the kingdom of

God consists in, who understand that the kingdom of God is within us, and who know how to

enter it, but others do not understand that. Others look and do not see, and listen and do not

understand, because their hearts have grown fat.

And so I speak in parables for two purposes; I speak to both. To some I say what the kingdom is

to God, and I tell them that some enter the kingdom, and others do not, and they can

understand me. But to you I tell how to enter the kingdom of God. And look and understand the

parable of the sower as is proper. For you the parable means this:

Every man who hears the teaching of the kingdom of God, but does not take it to his heart, is

overcome by deceit, and he destroys the teaching in his heart, — it is the seed sown by the

wayside. What is sown on the stones is he who hears the teaching and accepts it with joy. But

there is no root in him, and he receives it only for a while, and when pressure is brought to bear

and offence is offered him for his teaching, he himself takes offence. What is

sown among the

wormwood is he who hears the teaching, but the cares of the world and his eagerness for

wealth chokes the teaching and it gives forth no fruit. And what is sown on the good ground is

he who hears the teaching and understands and brings forth fruit, some a hundredfold, and

some sixty, and some thirty.

For he who holds on will get much, and he who does not hold will be deprived of the last.

And so see to it how you understand the parables. Understand them in such a way that you do

not submit to deception, offences, cares, but bring forth fruit a hundredfold and enter the

kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God grows large in the soul from nothing, but gives everything. It is like a birch

seed, which is the smallest of seeds; when it grows up it is greater than all the trees, and the

birds of heaven make their nests in it.

After that there came the disciples of John to ask Jesus whether he was the one of whom he

had said that he opened the kingdom of God and renovated men by the spirit.

Jesus replied, and said, Look and listen, and tell John whether the kingdom of God has come

and whether men are renovated by the spirit. Tell him how I preach the kingdom

of God. In the

prophecies it says that when the kingdom of God comes, all men will be blessed; tell him, then,

that my kingdom of God is such that the poor are blessed, and that every man who hears me

becomes blessed.

Having dismissed the disciples of John, Jesus began to explain to the people what kingdom of

God John had announced.

He said, When you went to be baptized by John in the wilderness, what did you go to see ? If

you wanted to see a man dressed in rich raiment, such men live here in palaces. What, then, is

it that you saw in the wilderness ? Do you think that you went because John was a prophet ? Do

not think so. John was not a prophet, but the one of whom the prophets have written. He is the

one who has announced the coming of the kingdom of God.

Verily I tell you, No greater man has been born than John. He was in the kingdom of God, and

so he was greater than all.

The law and the prophets were needed before John; but since John, and even now, the

kingdom of God upon earth is announced, and he who makes an effort enters into it.

The lawyers and the Pharisees did not understand what it was John was

announcing, and they

had no regard for him. This tribe, the lawyers and the Pharisees, regard as truth only what they

themselves invent. They learn their law by rote and listen to each other. But what John has said

and what I say they do not hear, nor understand. Of all that John has said they understood only

so much, that he fasted in the wilderness, and they say, The devil is in him. Of what I say they

have understood only this much, that I do not fast, and they say, He eats and drinks with the

tax-collectors, and is a friend of corrupt people.

They are like children in the street, who prattle with one another and wonder why no one listens

to them. Their wisdom is seen by their works.

Everything which I teach men to do is easy and simple, for the kingdom of God is announced as

bliss.

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Chapter IV. End.

THE LAW

John announced the coming of God into the world. He said that men must be purified in the

spirit in order that they may know the kingdom of God.

Jesus, who did not know his carnal father and who recognized God as his Father,

heard John's

sermon and asked himself what this God was, how he came into the world, and where he was.

And, departing into the wilderness, Jesus learned that the life of man was in the spirit, and

having convinced himself of this, that man always lives through God, that God is always in men,

and that the kingdom of God has always been and is always, and that men need only recognize

that, Jesus left the wilderness and began to prophesy to men that God has always been and is

always in the world, and that to know him we need be purified or regenerated in the spirit.

He announced that God wants no prayers, sacrifices, or temples, but that what he wants is

serving him in the spirit, doing good; he announced that the kingdom of God must not be

understood in this way, that God will come at some particular time and in some particular place, but that in the whole world and at all times all men, having purified themselves in the spirit, may

live in the power of God. He announced that the kingdom of God does not come in a visible

manner, but that it is within men. To be a participant in the kingdom one must be purified in the

spirit, that is, exalt the spirit within oneself, and serve it. He who exalts his spirit enters the

kingdom of God and receives non-temporal life. The possibility of exalting the

spirit and

becoming a participant in the kingdom of God lies in every man, and ever since John

announced the kingdom of God, the Jewish law has become unnecessary. Every man who

understands the kingdom of God, by his own efforts, having exalted the spirit in himself and

working for God, enters into the power of God.

To work for God and live in the kingdom, that is, to submit to him and fulfil his will, it is

necessary to know the law of this kingdom. And so Jesus announces wherein the exaltation of

the spirit and the work for God must consist, what is the law of the kingdom of God.

Jesus prays all night long, and choosing twelve men, who understand him completely, goes out

to the people with them, and tells them what the exaltation of the spirit and the service of God

consists in, what the law of the kingdom of God is.

The law of God's power consists above all in this, that the whole man should give himself over

into the power of God, and Jesus, casting a glance at the people and pointing to the disciples,

says:

Happy are you, vagrants, you are in the power of God. You are happy. What of it if you are

hungry now ? After you have been hungry, you will eat. You are happy. Even though you are

mourning and weeping now, you will have your consolation later. You are happy. Let men

esteem you little and drive you away from everywhere. Be glad of it, for thus did they drive all

those men who announced the will of God.

But unfortunate are you, rich men, for you have received everything which you have wished for,

and shall receive nothing more. If you are filled now, you will be hungry. If you are merry now,

you shall be sad. Unfortunate you are, if all praise you, for all men praise only liars.

Happy are you, vagrants, for you are in the power of God; you are happy only when you are

vagrants not only in appearance, but with your soul; just as the salt is good only when it is salt

not merely in appearance, but is salty in itself. You know yourselves that true happiness lies in

being a vagrant. But if you are vagrants only in appearance, you are like unsalted salt, and are

good for nothing. If you understand this, then show by your deeds that you want to be vagrants,

and be not like others.

If you are the light of men, show your light, and do not hide it, so that men may see indeed that

you know the truth, and, looking at your deeds, may understand that you are the children of the

Father your God.

Do not think that being a vagrant means being lawless. I do not teach in order to loosen your

hands from the divine law; on the contrary, I teach you to fulfil the divine law. As long as there

are men under heaven, the law as to what may be done, and what not, exists for men. There

will be no law when men will naturally do everything according to the law. Here I give you some

rules for the fulfilment of the law.

If a man shall not fulfil a single one of them and shall teach you that it may be left unfulfilled, he

will be farthest away from God; but he who fulfils them all and teaches you to do so will be

nearest to God. For, if in the fulfilment of the law by you there will not be more truth than in the fulfilment of the law of the Pharisees and the scribes, you will not unite with God.

Here are the rules:

First rule: The justice of the scribes and the Pharisees consists in this, that if a man kills

another, he must be tried and sentenced to punishment.

But my rule is that it is as bad to grow angry with your brother as it is to kill. I forbid anger

against a brother with the same threat with which the Pharisees and scribes

forbid murder. Still

more severely and with a greater threat do I forbid you cursing a brother, and still more severely

and with a still greater threat do I forbid your insulting a brother.

I forbid this, because you consider it necessary to go to the temple, to offer sacrifices, and you

go and offer sacrifices and regard the sacrifices as important; still more important are peace,

concord, and love among yourselves for the sake of God, and you cannot pray or think of God if

there is even one man with whom you are not at peace.

Second rule:

The Pharisees and scribes say, If thou committest adultery, thou and the woman are to be killed

together, and if thou wantest to commit adultery, give thy wife a writ of divorcement.

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But I say, If thou leavest thy wife, thou art not only a debauchee, thou also causest her to

commit debauchery, and him also who takes her up. If thou livest with thy wife and takest it into

thy head to fall in love with another woman, thou art already an adulterer, and art worthy of

having that done to thee which is done with an adulterer. And I forbid this with the same threat

with which the Pharisees and scribes forbid committing fornication with another

woman,

because every debauchery causes the soul to perish, and it is better for thee to renounce carnal

pleasure than to cause the ruin of thy life.

And so the second rule is: Satisfy thy lust with thy wife and do not think that love of woman is

good.

The third rule is this :

The Pharisees and scribes say, Do not pronounce in vain the name of the Lord thy God, for

God will not let go unpunished the man who uses his name in vain, that is, Do not invoke God

in a lie, and again, Do not swear in my name in a lie, and do not dishonour the name of thy God.

I am the Lord (your God), that is, do not swear by me in untruth, so as to defile your God.

But I say that every oath is a defilement of God, and so do not swear at all. Thou canst not

promise anything, for thou art entirely in the power of God. Thou canst not make a single gray

hair black, how then canst thou swear in advance that thou wilt do so and so, and how canst

thou swear by God ? Every oath of thine is a defilement of God, for if thou hast to carry out an

oath which is contrary to the will of God, it will turn out that thou hast promised to act against his

will, and so every oath is an evil. Besides, an oath is foolish and meaningless.

So here is the third rule: Never swear to any one about anything. Say, Yes, when it is, Yes, and,

No, when it is, No, and know that if thou art required to swear, it is evil.

Fourth rule:

You have heard that it has been said of old time, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. The

Pharisees and scribes teach you to do everything which is written in the old books as to how

you are to punish for all kinds of crimes. It says there that he who destroys life must give his life,

an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, an ox for an ox, a slave for a slave, and so forth.

But I tell you, Do not struggle against evil with evil, and not only do not demand an ox for an ox,

a slave for a slave, life for life, but do not even resist evil. If a man wants to get thy ox by a

lawsuit, give him two; if a man wants to get thy coat away, give him also thy cloak; if a man

knocks a tooth out of one jaw, offer him also the other jaw. If they compel thee to do a certain

amount of work, work twice as much. If they take thy property from thee, give it to them. If they

do not return thy money to thee, do not ask for it, and so, do not judge and do not litigate, and

do not punish, and you will not be judged and punished. Forgive everybody and

you will be

forgiven, for if you are going to judge men, they will judge you. Besides, you must not judge,

because all of us men are blind and do not see the truth. How can I with dust-filled eyes see the

dust in my brother's eye ? First I must clean my own eyes, and whose eyes are clean ? If we

judge, we are ourselves blind. If we are going to judge others and punish them, we are like the

blind guiding the blind.

Besides, says Jesus, What do we teach? We punish by force, with wounds, maiming, and

death, 'that is, with malice, precisely what is forbidden in the commandment, Thou shalt not kill.

And what comes of it ? We want to teach men, and we corrupt them. What else can there be but

that the pupil will learn from the teacher and be exactly like him ? What will he do after he has

learned everything? The same that the teacher does: he will commit violence, and will kill.

And do not think that you will find justice in the courts. To turn the love of justice over to the

courts is the same as throwing precious pearls before the swine, for they will tread them

underfoot and will break them.

And so the fourth rule is: No matter how much they may offend thee, do not put

out the evil by

evil, do not sit in judgment or go to court, do not punish, and do not complain.

Fifth rule:

The Pharisees and scribes say, Make no war on thy brother in thy heart; arraign thy neighbour,

and thou wilt not bear his sins; kill all the men, and take all the wives and the cattle from thy

enemy, that is, Eespect thy countrymen and have no regard for strangers.

But I tell you, Do good not only to thy countrymen, but also to strangers. Let strangers esteem

you little, let them attack and offend you, respect them, and do them good. Only then will you be

true children of your Father. To him all are alike. If you are good to your countrymen alone, you

are doing what all nations are doing, and that leads to wars. But be the same to all nations, and

you will be the children of God. All men are his children, consequently all are your brothers.

And so the fifth rule is: Observe toward foreign nations what I have told you to observe among

yourselves. There are no hostile nations, no different kingdoms and kings. All are brothers, all

are children of the same Father. Make no distinction among people according to nations and

kingdoms.

So: (1) Do not be angry; (2) do not amuse yourself with the lust.of fornication;

(3) do not swear

to any one about anything; (4) do not sit in judgment and do not litigate; and (5) make no

distinction between the different nations; know no kings and no kingdoms.

And here is another instruction, which includes all these rules: Everything which you wish that

men should do to you, do you to them. When you will execute this, it is clear that your life will be

changed. You will have no property, and that is not necessary. Do not build up your life upon

earth, but build it in God. The life on earth will perish, and the life in God will not perish. And do

not think of the life upon earth, for if you will think of it, you will not be able to think of the life in God. Where the soul is, there is the heart also.

And if there is no light in your eyes, you are all in darkness. So if you wish and look for the

darkness, you will enter the darkness. It is impossible to look with one eye upon heaven and

with the other upon earth; it is impossible to repose your heart in an earthly life and to think of

God. You will work either for the earthly life, or for God. And so: Beware of every selfishness.

Man's life is not from what he has, hut from God, so that if a man should take the whole world,

there would he no profit to his soul from it. And foolishly will act the man who will cause his life

to perish in order to obtain as many possessions as possible.

Consequently, do not trouble yourselves as to what you are going to eat and drink, and how you

are going to clothe yourselves. Life is more important than food and raiment, and God has given

it to you.

Look at God's creatures, at the birds. They do not sow, nor reap, nor collect the grain, but God

feeds them. And is not man as much as the birds before God? If God has given life to man, he

will be able to feed him also. And you know yourselves that no matter how much you trouble

yourselves, you are not able to do anything for yourselves. You cannot lengthen your life for one

little hour. (The thought is beyond the mountains, but death is behind the shoulders.)

And do not trouble yourselves so much about your raiment. The flowers of the field do not work,

nor spin, and yet they are adorned as Solomon never adorned himself. If God has so adorned

the grass, which grows today and to-morrow will be mowed down, will he not clothe you ?

Do not have any care and trouble yourselves; do not say that you must think of what you are

going to eat and what you will wear. All men need that, and God knows the need of every one.

Even so do not trouble yourselves as to what will be, as to the future. Live for the present day.

Take heed that you are in the will of God. Desire only the one thing which is important, and the

rest will come to you itself. Try only to be in the will of God, and you will be in it. He who knocks,

to him it will be opened; who asks, to him it will be given. If you will ask for what is present, what

you need, it will be given to you.

Is there a father who would give his son a stone instead of bread, or a snake instead of a fish ?

How, then, will your Father refuse to give you what you really need, if you ask him for it ? But

what you really need is the life of the spirit, so ask for that alone.

To pray does not mean to do what the hypocrites are doing in the churches, or in the sight of

men. They do so for men, and from them they receive their praise, and not from God. But if thou

wishest to enter into the will of thy Father, go there where no one can see thee and pray to thy

Father the spirit, and the Father will see what there is in thy soul, and will give thee the true

spirit. And do not uselessly wag thy tongue, as the hypocrites do. Thy father knows what thou

needest, before thou openest thy mouth.

This is the way you ought to pray: Our Father! Let me be in thy kingdom, that is,

let thy will be in

me. Give me such food as I need. And forgive me my faults, as I forgive them in others.

If you ask God for the spirit, find no fault with men, and God will forgive you your faults. And if

you do not forgive men, God will not forgive you.

Do nothing to be praised by men. If you do so for men, you will receive your reward from men.

So if thou art compassionate toward men, do not sound thy trumpet about it before men, for the

hypocrites do so, that men may praise them. They receive what they wish. But thou, if thou art

compassionate to men, do good in such a way that no one may see it. And thy Father will see

it, and will give thee what thou needest.

And if thou sufferest oppression for the sake of God, do not weep and complain before men, as

the hypocrites do, that men may see and praise them, for they receive what they want. But do

differently: if thou sufferest for the sake of God, go about with a happy face, that men may not

see, but thy Father will see, and will give thee what thou needest.

Such is the entrance into the kingdom of God. There is but one entrance to the will of God, and

it is narrow. There is always but one entrance, and all around is a large and broad field, and if

you walk over it you will not come to the haven. Only a narrow path leads into life, and only a

few walk over it.

Do not lose your courage, though a little flock you be. You will enter into it, because the Father

will teach you his will.

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Chapter V end.

THE EXECUTION OF THE LAW GIVES TRUE LIFE

And Jesus was sorry for men, because they perished not knowing wherein the true life was, and

suffered and were harassed, themselves not knowing why, like abandoned sheep without a

shepherd. And Jesus says to the people, You worry about the life of the flesh: you are hitched to

a wagon which you cannot pull, and have put on a yoke which was not made for you.

Comprehend my teaching and follow it, and you will know rest and joy in life. I give you another

yoke and another wagon,

— spiritual life. Hitch yourselves to it, and you will learn of rest and bliss from me.

You must be meek and humble, and then you will find bliss in your life, for my teaching is a yoke

which is made for you, and the execution of my teaching is a light wagon, made according to

your strength.

And Jesus went through cities and villages, and taught all the blessedness of life according to

the will of God. Then he chose seventy men from among those who were near to him, and sent

them to those places where he wanted himself to be. He said to them, Many men do not know

the good of the true life, — I am sorry for all of them and wish to teach all, but as the master is

not able to attend to the harvest of the whole field, so I cannot attend to it. Go to different cities,

and in all places announce the coming of God and the law of God. Say that to be blessed one

must be a vagrant, and that the law is all in five rules against evil: (1) not to be angry; (2) not to

commit debauchery; (3) not to swear, to make no promises whatever; (4) not to resist evil, not to

go to court; and (5) not to make any distinction between men, and to disregard kings and

kingdoms.

.And so execute these rules yourselves. First of all, be mendicants, vagrants. Take nothing with

you, neither scrip, nor bread, nor money. All you must have is raiment on your body, and

footgear. Announce the blessedness of the mendicants, and so, above all, be an example of

mendicancy. Choose no hosts to stop with, but stay in whatever house you enter first. When

you come into the house, greet the hosts. If they receive you, all is well; and if not, go to another

house. You will be hated for what you will say, and they will attack and drive you away. And if

they drive you away, go to another village; and if they drive you from it, go to another still. They

will drive you, as wolves drive the sheep, but do not lose your courage and do not weaken to the last hour. And they will take you into court and will judge you, and flog you, and take you before

the officers, that you may justify yourselves before them. And when they will take you to court,

do not lose your courage, and do not think what you are going to say. The spirit of God will tell

you what to say. Before you will have gone through all the cities, men will understand your

teaching, and will turn to you.

Be not afraid. What is hidden in the souls of men will come out. What you will tell to two or three

will be scattered among thousands. Above all, do not fear those who may kill your body. What of

it if they kill your body ? They can do nothing to your soul. So do not fear them. Bear this, that

your body and soul may not perish, if you depart from the law. This is what you want to fear.

For one cent you can buy five sparrows, and even they do not die without the

will of God. And a

hair of the head will not fall without the will of God, so what are you to fear, if you are in the will

of God ? God will be with him who before men will be one with the will of God; but who before

men will renounce the will of God, him God will renounce also. Not all will believe in my

teaching, that it is necessary to be a mendicant, a vagrant, not to be angry, not to commit

debauchery, not to swear, not to judge or go to court, not to wage war. And those who will not

believe will hate it, because it deprives them of what they like, and there will be dissension.

My teaching will, like a fire, burn up the world. And so there must be dissension in the world.

There will be dissension in every house. Bather will be against son, mother against daughter,

and the housefolk will be haters of those who will understand my teaching. And they will kill

them. For he who will understand my teaching will see no meaning in his father, or mother, or

wife, or children, or all his property. He who thinks more of his father or mother than of my

teaching has not comprehended my teaching. He who is not at all times ready for all kinds of

sufferings of the flesh is not my disciple. He who will care for this carnal life will cause the true

life to perish, and he who will cause this carnal life to perish according to my teaching will save

his life.

The seventy disciples went out over the cities and villages, and did what Jesus had

commanded. When they returned, they told Jesus with joy, The devilish teaching about anger,

adultery, oaths, judgments, and wars is everywhere giving way before us.

And Jesus said to them, Do not rejoice because the evil is yielding to you, but because you are

in the will of God.

And then Jesus rejoiced on account of the power of the spirit, and said, From the fact that my

disciples have understood me and that the evil is vanquished by them, I see that thou art the

highest spirit, — the beginning of everything, truly the Father of men, — because what the wise

and learned men could not understand with all their learning, the unreasoning have

comprehended by recognizing themselves to be the children of the Father. And thou, as the

Father, hast disclosed everything to them, through the love which is between a father and his

son. Everything which a man needs to know is disclosed to him through the love of the Father

for the son and of the son for the Father. Only him who recognizes himself as the

son does the

Father recognize.

And the people of his house came and wanted to bind him, for they thought that he was mad.

And the Pharisees and the lawyers came from Jerusalem, and said, He is mad: he wants to

mend a lesser evil with a greater evil. That there may be no mendicants, he wants to make all

men mendicants, and he wants nobody to be punished, and the robbers to kill everybody, and

to have no wars, though then the enemies will kill everybody.

And he said, You say that my teaching is evil, and at the same time you say that I destroy the

evil. That cannot be, for evil cannot be destroyed by evil. If I destroy evil, my teaching cannot be

evil, for evil cannot go against itself. If evil went against itself, there would be no evil. You cast

out the evil according to your law. How do you cast out the evil ? By the law of Moses, and this

law is from God. But I cast out the evil with the spirit of God, which has always been in you. It is

only for this reason that I can expel the evil. ' And the fact that I expel evil is a proof to you that

my teaching is true, and that the spirit of God is in men and is stronger than the carnal lusts. If

that did not exist, it would not be possible to vanquish the lust of evil, as it is

impossible to enter

the house of a strong man and rob it. To rob the house of a strong man, it is necessary first to

bind the man. And thus are men bound by the spirit of God.

He who is not with me is against me. He who does not harvest in the field only loses the corn,

for he who is not with me is not with the spirit of God, — he is an adversary of the spirit.

And so I tell you that every human mistake and every false interpretation will be forgiven, but the

false interpretation about the spirit of God will not be forgiven. If a man says a word against

another, that will pass; but if he will say a word against what is holy in man,— against the spirit

of God, that will not pass unnoticed; scold me as much as you please, but do not call evil the

good which I am doing. Man will not be forgiven for calling the good evil, that is, the works which

I do. One has to be with the spirit of God, or against it.

Either consider the tree good, and its fruit good, or consider it bad, and its fruit bad, for by its

fruit is the tree esteemed. You see me expel evil, consequently my teaching is good. Every man

who expels evil, no matter what his teaching may be, cannot be against us, but is with us, for

one can expel evil only with the spirit of God.

After that Jesus came for the holiday to Jerusalem. And there was then a pool in Jerusalem.

And they said about this pool that an angel stepped into it, and that caused the water of the pool

to well up, and if one leaped into the water immediately after it began to well up, he was cured

from whatever disease he may have had.

And there were porches built around this pool. And on these porches lay all kinds of sick people,

waiting for the water in the pool to well up, in order to leap into it.

Jesus came to the pool, and saw a man lying on a porch. Jesus asked who he was. The man

told him that he had been ailing for thirty-eight years, and that he had been waiting for a long

time to be the first to leap into the pool, after the water had begun to well up, but that he could

never succeed, for others got in before him.

Jesus looked at him, and said, In vain dost thou wait here for a miracle from the angel. There

are no miracles. There is one miracle, and that is, that God has given life to men, and it is

necessary to live with all one's powers. Do not wait for anything at this pool, but take thy bed,

and live according to the divine law, according to the strength which God will give thee.

The sick man obeyed him, and got up and went away.

Jesus said to him, Thou seest thyself that thou hast the strength. See to it that thou wilt not

believe again in all this deception. Do not make this error again, but live according to the power

which God gives thee.

And the man went and told everybody what had happened to him. And all those who had been

working the deception of the pool and were making a living thereby grew angry, and they did not

know how to wreak their vengeance and to annoy the sick man and Jesus for having disclosed

their deception. They found a pretext for doing so in its being a Sabbath, for on the Sabbath it

was not permitted, according to their law, to work. At first they attacked the sick man, and said,

How didst thou dare take up thy bed on the Sabbath ? It is not lawful to work on the Sabbath.

The sick man said to them, He who raised me up told me to take up the bed.

They said, Who ordered thee to do so ?

He said, I do not know. A man came up to me and went away again.

The Pharisees made their way to Jesus, and, finding him, they said, How couldst thou order the

man to rise and take up his bed on a Sabbath ?

To this Jesus said to them, My Father never stops working, and so I will never stop working,

whether it be a week-day or a Sabbath. The Sabbath did not make man, but man

made the

Sabbath.

Then the Jews grew angrier still, because he dared to call God his Father. And they attacked

him, and Jesus replied to them, A man could not do anything of himself, if God the Father — the

spirit of God in man — did not point out to him what to do. God, the Father of man, lives and

works always, and man lives and works always. God the Father gave men reason for their own

good, and showed them what is good and what bad.

Just as God gives life, so also the spirit of God gives life. God the Father does not choose and

decide anything himself, but, having taught men what is good and what bad, he leaves

everything to man to do, so that men may honour the spirit of God and obey it within

themselves, as they honour and obey God. He who does not honour the spirit of God in himself

does not honour God. You must understand that he who has completely abandoned himself to

my teaching has exalted the spirit in himself, and in it reposes his life, he has non-temporal life

and is already freed from death. It is clear that now the dead, having comprehended the

meaning of their life, that they are the sons of God, will live. For as God is alive

in himself, so is

the son alive in himself. The freedom of the choice is the same as that the spirit of God is in

man, — it is the whole man.

Do not marvel at this teaching; the time has come when all mortals will be divided. Some, who

do good, will find life, and those who do evil will be destroyed.

I cannot choose anything of myself. What I have comprehended from the Father, that I choose.

My choice is correct, if I do not hold to my own wish, but to the meaning which I have

comprehended from the Father. If I were the only one to assure you that I am right, because I

want it to be so, you might not have believed me. But there is another who gives the assurance

about me, — that I am doing right. That is the spirit of God, and you know that this assurance is

true.

You see by my works that the Father has sent me. God the Father has shown concerning me in

your souls and in the Scriptures. You have not comprehended his voice, and you have not

known him. You have not his firm comprehension within you, for you do not believe that which

he has sent, — the spirit of God in your souls.

Try to comprehend it: you expect to find life in your souls, and you will find

there within you the

spirit of God.

But you will not believe me that you will have life.

I esteem little your praying in your temples, and your observing the fasts and the Sabbaths

according to human laws; the true love of the true God is not in you.

I teach you in the name of my Father and of yours, but you do not understand me. If a man will teach you in his own name, you will believe him. What can you rely upon, since you receive

your sayings from one another, and do not seek the teaching as to the Father of the son. I am

not the only one who shows you that you are wrong before your Father. That same Moses, in

whom

you trust, shows you that you are wrong and do not understand him. If you relied on what

Moses said, you * would rely also on what I tell you. If you do not rely on his writings, you will

not believe my teaching, either.

And that they might understand it, that they might understand that it is possible to enter into the

will of God without an effort, he told them a parable: A king received an inheritance. In order to

receive this inheritance, the king had for a time to depart from his kingdom. And so the king

went away.

But before his departure he distributed his possessions among his subjects, giving to each

according to his ability: to one five talents, to another two, to a third one, and he commanded

them to work without him and to gain by these talents as much as each could.

When the king went away, each man did with his property whatever he could. Some worked,

and he who had five talents earned other five talents; another with his one talent gained ten

more; others with their two talents gained two, or with their one gained five more or only one

more; and others again did not work with the money given to them by their master, but hid the

money away in the ground. Those who had taken five talents had the five talents left; those who

had taken two had two, and those who had taken one had one left. And others again, who did

not work with the master's money, did not want to appear before the king, but sent word to him

that they did not wish to be under his power.

When the time came, the king returned into his kingdom, and he called all his subjects to give

accounts of themselves, what each had done with what had been given him.

And one servant came, the one to whom five talents had been given, and he said, With the five

talents I have gained five more. And another came, to whom one talent had been

given, and he

said, Here, with the one talent

I have gained ten more. And then came he who had received two talents, and he brought two

more, and the one who had received one brought five more. And still another to whom one

talent had been given brought one more.

And the master praised them all alike and rewarded them alike. He said to all alike, I see that

you are good and faithful servants: you have worked over my possessions, and so I receive you

as equal participants in what is mine. We shall rule together.

After that came those subjects who had not worked over the master's possessions. And one of

them said, Master, thou gavest me a talent at thy departure. I know that thou art a hard man and

wantest to take from us what thou hast not given us, and so I was afraid of thee and from fear

hid away thy talent. Here it is in full. What thou hast given me I return to thee. And others who

had received five talents, and those who had received ten talents, brought back the master's

talents, and they said the same to him.

Then the master said to them, Foolish people! You say that out of fear of me you hid your

talents in the ground and did not work with them. If you knew that I was a hard

man and will take

what I have not given, why did you not try to do what I commanded ?

If you had worked with my talent, your possessions would have been increased, and you would

have done my will, and I might have had mercy on you, and you would not have fared worse.

But now you have not got away from my power anyway.

And the master took the talents away from those who had not worked with them, and told his

servants to give them to those who had gained more.

And the servants said, Master, they have enough as it is. But the king said, Give to those who

have earned for me, for to him who looks after his own it shall be added, and from him who

does not look after his own even the last shall be taken from him.

But drive away these foolish and lazy servants. Let them not be here. And drive away those also

who sent word to me that they did not want to be in my power, and let them not be here.

This king is the beginning of life, — the spirit. The world is the kingdom, but he does not himself

govern the kingdom, but, like a peasant, he casts out the seed and leaves it alone. And the field

brings forth blades, ears, and kernels of its own accord. The talent is the comprehension in

every man. God the spirit has put the comprehension in every man, and leaves

men to live

according to their will.

God himself decides nothing, but having instructed man in everything, leaves it to every man to

decide for himself. Not all have the same talent, but each receives according to his ability. Not to

all is the same comprehension given, but it is given, and for God there is no greater and no

lesser. All God needs is work over the comprehension. Some work with the talent of their

master; others do not work for their master; others again do not work and do not acknowledge

the master. Some men live by the comprehension; others do not live by it; and others again do

not acknowledge it. The master comes back and asks for an account. That is the temporal

death and accounting of life. Some come and say that they have worked with the talent, and

they enter into the life of the master. And the master does not count who has worked more, and

who less. All become alike participants in the life of the master. He who accepts the

comprehension has life.

He who has the comprehension and relies on him who has sent it has non-temporal life and

knows no death: he has passed into life. Others come and say that they have not

worked with

the talent: they do not refuse the talent; they only say that there is no sense in working, for,

whether they work or not, they will meet with punishment. They know the severity of the master.

Other men have the comprehension, but do not rely on it. They say to themselves, Whether I

work or not, I shall die, and nothing will be left, and so there " is no sense doing anything with it.

To this the king says, If thou knowest that I am severe, thou oughtest so much the more to have

done my will. Why did you not try to do it ? If men know that temporal death is inevitable, why

should they not try to live by the doing of the will of God, — by the comprehension ? And the

king says, Take the talent from them, and give it to those who have. It makes no difference to

the king where the talents are, so long as they are, just as it makes no difference to the peasant

what kernel will bring forth ears, so long as he has a harvest. If the comprehension gives life to

men according to their will, then those who do not hold it cannot live and stand outside of life.

And after the temporal death nothing will be left of them. And of the men who do not

acknowledge the king's power, the king says, Throw those men out. These other men not only

fail to work with the comprehension and life, but even despise the Father of the spirit who has

given it to them, — they, too, cannot live, and are also destroyed with death.

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Chapter VI end

TO RECEIVE THE TRUE LIFE MAN MUST RENOUNCE THE FALSE LIFE OF THE FLESH

For the life of the spirit there can be no difference between relatives and strangers. Jesus says

that his mother and brothers signify nothing to him as mother and brothers: close to him are only

those who do the will of the common Father.

Man's blessedness and life do not depend on his domestic relations, but on the life of the spirit.

Jesus says that blessed are those who keep the comprehension of the Father. For a man living

by the spirit there is no home. Animals have homes, but man lives by the spirit, and so cannot

have a home. Jesus says that he has no definite place for himself. To do the will of the Father

one does not need any definite place, — it is everywhere and at all times possible. Carnal death

cannot be terrible to men who give themselves to the will of the Father, for the life of the spirit

does not depend on the death of the

31. Which of the two did his father's will? They say to him, The first.

flesh. Jesus says that he who believes in the life of the spirit cannot be afraid of anything. No

cares can keep a man from living by the spirit. To the words of the man, that he will later fulfil

the teaching of Jesus, but that first he wants to bury his father, Jesus replies, Only the dead can

trouble themselves about burying the dead, but the living always live in the fulfilment of the will

of the Father.

The cares about family and domestic matters cannot interfere with the life of the spirit. He who

troubles himself to find out what his carnal life will profit from doing the will of the Father, is

doing the same that the ploughman does, when he ploughs and looks backward, and not

forward. The cares for the joys of the carnal life, which seem so important to people, are a

dream. The only real work of life is the announcement of the will of the Father, the attention paid

to it, and the fulfilment of it. To Martha's rebuke that she is attending herself to the supper, while

her sister Mary is not helping her, but is listening to his teaching, Jesus says, Why dost thou

rebuke her ? Look after thy cares, if thou needest that which thy cares give thee, but let those

who do not need carnal pleasures do that one thing which is necessary for life. Jesus says, He

who wants to attain the true life, which consists in doing the will of the Father, must first of all

renounce his personal wishes: he must not only keep from arranging his life as he wishes, but

must also be prepared for all privations and sufferings. He who wants to arrange his carnal life

as he wishes will lose the true life of the fulfilment of the will of the Father.

There is no advantage in acquiring for the carnal life, if this acquisition causes the life of the

spirit to perish. Nothing causes the life of the spirit to perish so much as selfishness, the

acquisition of wealth. Men forget that, no matter how much wealth and how much property they

may acquire, they are liable to die at any moment, and their possessions are not needed for

their life. Death hangs over every one of us: sickness, murder, unfortunate accidents, may at

any second cut our life short. Carnal death is an inevitable condition of every second of life. If a

man lives, he must look at every hour of his life as at an hour of grace, given to him by

somebody's favour. We must remember this, and not say that we do not know it. We know and

foresee what happens in heaven and on earth, but we forget the death which, we know, is lying

in wait for us at any second.

If we do not forget this, we cannot abandon ourselves to the life of the flesh, — we cannot count on it. In order to follow my teaching, a man must count up the advantages from serving the

carnal life of his will and the advantages from doing the will of the Father. Only he who has

clearly figured that out can be my disciple. He who has made the correct account will not be

sorry to give up the seeming good and the seeming life in order to obtain the true good and the

true life.

The true life has been given to men, and men know and hear its call, but deprive themselves of

it, as they are distracted by momentary cares. The true life is like a feast, which a rich man

gave, when he invited the guests. He called the guests, just as the voice of the spirit of God

calls all men to him. But some of the guests were busy with commerce, others with their farms,

and others again with domestic matters, — and they did not come to the feast. But the poor,

who have no carnal cares, came to the feast and were made happy. Even so men, being

distracted by the cares of the carnal life, deprive themselves of the true life. He who will not

completely renounce all cares and terrors of carnal life cannot do the will of the Father, for it is

impossible to serve oneself a little and God a little. It is necessary to figure out whether it is

advantageous to serve one's flesh, whether it is possible to arrange life as one wants to arrange

it. We must do the same that a man does who wants to build a house or go to war. He will make

his account, to see whether he can finish building, or whether he will obtain a victory. When he

sees that he cannot, he does not waste his labours, nor his army. Or else he will waste it and

will become a laughing-stock of people. If it were possible to arrange the carnal life as one

wants to arrange it, one ought to serve his flesh; but, since it is impossible to do so, it is better to

abandon everything carnal, and to serve the spirit, or else it will be neither this nor that. You

cannot arrange your carnal life, and the life of the spirit you will lose, and so, to do the will of the

Father, it is necessary completely to renounce the carnal life.

The carnal life is that seeming wealth which is entrusted to us by others, and which we must use

in such a way as to obtain the true wealth. If a steward is living with a rich man, and knows that,

no matter how much he may serve his master, the master will discharge him and leave him

without anything, the steward acts wisely if, as long as he is still in charge of the wealth, which is

not his own, he will do good to people. If then the master will abandon him, those to whom he

has done good will receive him and will feed him.

The same ought men to do with their carnal life. The carnal life is that foreign wealth of which

they are in charge for but a short time. If they make good use of this wealth, they will receive

their own true wealth. If we do not give up our false possessions, we shall not receive the true

possessions. It is impossible to serve the false life of the flesh and the spirit, — one has to serve

the one or the other. One cannot serve wealth and God. What is great before men is an

abomination before God. Before God wealth is evil. The rich man is guilty for the very reason

that he eats much and luxuriously, while the poor starve at his door. Everybody knows that the

property which thou dost not give up to others is a non-fulfilment of the will of the Father.

An Orthodox rich chief once came to Jesus, and began to boast of keeping the commandments

of the law. Jesus reminded him that there was a commandment to love all men as oneself, and

that in this consisted the will of the Father. The chief said that he kept also this commandment.

Then Jesus told him, That is not true. If thou wantest to do the will of the Father, thou wouldst

not have any possessions. It is impossible for thee to do the will of the Father, if thou hast any

property which thou hast not distributed to others. And Jesus said to the

disciples, People think

that it is impossible to live without possessions, but I tell you, The true life consists in giving to others what belongs to one.

A man named Zaccheus heard the teaching of Christ and believed him. He invited him to his

house, and said to him, I give half of my possessions to the poor, and I will give fourfold to

whomsoever I have offended. And Jesus said, Here is a man who does the will of the Father, for

there is not any one position in which a man does the will of God, but our whole life is its

fulfilment, and this man fulfils it.

The will of the Father is that all men should return to it.

The good cannot be measured: it cannot be said who has done more, who less. The widow who

gives away her last mite gives more than the rich man who gives away thousands, Nor can the

good be measured by its being useful or useless. As an example of how the good ought to be

done may serve the woman who pitied Jesus and senselessly poured three hundred pence'

worth of oil on his feet. Judas said that she acted foolishly, that with that money the poor could

have been fed. But Judas was a thief: he lied and, speaking of the carnal profit, was not thinking

of the poor. What is needed is not profit, not quantity, but the doing of the will of

the Father: to

love and to live for others.

One day Jesus' mother and brothers came to him, and could not see him, for there was a great

multitude about him. And a man, seeing them, went up to Jesus and said:

Thy family, thy mother and thy brothers, are standing outside: they want to see thee.

My mother and brothers are those who understand the will of the Father and do it.

And a woman said, Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the teats which thou hast sucked.

To this Jesus said, Blessed are always those who have comprehended the comprehension of

the Father, and who keep it.

And a man said to Jesus, I will follow thee, wherever thou mayest go. And Jesus said to him,

There is no place for thee to go to, for I have no home, no place, where I live. Only animals

have lairs and dens, but man is spirit, and he is everywhere at home, if he lives by the spirit.

One day Jesus was sailing in a ship with his disciples. He said, Let us sail to the other side.

A storm rose on the sea and began to drench them, and they were almost drowned. But he was

lying at the stern, and sleeping. They awakened him, and said, Teacher, does it not make any

difference to thee that we are drowning ? And when the storm subsided, he said,
Why are you

so timid, and have no faith in the life of the spirit ?

Jesus said to a man, Follow me. And the man said, My old father has died. Let
me first bury

him, and then I will follow thee. And Jesus said to him, Let the dead bury the
dead: and if thou

wishest to be alive, do the will of the Father and proclaim it.

And another man said, I will be thy disciple, and will do the will of the Father, as
thou

commandest, but allow me first to arrange matters at home. And Jesus said to
him, If a

ploughman looks back, he cannot plough. No matter how much you may look
back, you cannot

plough. A man must forget everything but the furrow which he is making, and
then only will he

be able to plough. If thou discussest what it will profit the life of the flesh, thou
hast not

comprehended the real life, and thou canst not live by it.

After this it once happened that Jesus and his disciples entered a village. And a
woman named

Martha invited them to her house.

And Martha had a sister Mary, and she sat down at the feet of Jesus and listened
to his

teaching. And Martha was trying to give them a good entertainment. And Martha
went up to

Jesus, and said, Thou dost not even care that my sister has left me alone to serve. Tell her to work with me.

And Jesus replied to her, Martha, Martha, thou carest and troublest thyself about many things,

but there is only one thing necessary, and Mary has chosen the one thing which she needs and

which no one will take from her. For life nothing but the food of the spirit is needed.

And Jesus said to all, He who wants to follow me must renounce his will and must be prepared

at all times for all privations and for all sufferings of the flesh, and then only can he follow me.

For he who wants to care for his carnal life will lose the true life. But he who loses the carnal life,

doing the will of the Father, will save the true life; for what profit is it to a man if he has the whole

world, and loses or injures his life ?

And hearing this, a man said, It is well, if there is a life of the spirit; but how if we give up

everything, and there is not that life ?

To this Jesus said, You know that the doing of the will of the Father gives life to all; but you are

drawn away from this life by false cares, and you reject it. You do like this: a man prepared a

dinner, and sent out the servants to call the guests, but the guests excused themselves.

One said, I have bought a piece of land, and I must go and see it. Another said, I have bought

some oxen, and I must go and try them. The third said, I have married, and I am going to have a

wedding.

And the servants came, and told their master that no one was coming. Then the master sent the

servants out to call in the beggars. The beggars did not excuse themselves, but came. And

when they came, there was still room left.

And the master sent the servants to invite more men, saying, Go and tell them all to come to my

dinner. Let there be as many as possible at the dinner; but those who have refused on the

ground of being busy will miss it.

Everybody knows that the doing of the will of God gives life, but they do not come, because they

are distracted by the deception of wealth.

And Jesus said, Beware of riches, for thy life does not depend on having more than others

have.

There was a rich man, and he had a good harvest of corn. And he said to himself, I will build

new barns, I will make them large, and will gather all my wealth in them. And. I will say to my

soul, Here, soul, is everything in abundance for thee: eat, drink, and live for thy

pleasure.

And God said to him, Fool! This very night will thy soul be taken, and everything which thou hast

gathered will be left for others. Thus is done to all who prepare for the carnal life, and do not live

in God.

And Jesus said to them, You say that Pilate killed the Galileans. Were these Galileans worse

than other men, that this has happened with them ? Not at all. We are all such men, and all of

us will perish in the same way, if we do not find salvation from death. And those eighteen men

who were killed by the tower, when it fell in, were they some special men, worse than the rest of

the inhabitants of Jerusalem ? Not at all. If we do not save ourselves from death, we shall die in

the same way, if not one day, then another.

If we have not yet perished like them, we ought to think in this manner: a man has an apple-tree

growing in his garden. The master comes into the garden to look at the tree, and sees that it has

no fruit on it. So the master says to the gardener, I have been coming here these three years,

and the apple-tree is still barren. It has to be cut down, for it wastes the ground. And the

gardener says, Let us wait awhile, master. I will dig it round, and will put

manure all about it, and we shall see whether it will give fruit next summer. If it does not, we shall cut it down then.

Even so we are a barren apple-tree, as long as we live in the flesh and do not bear the fruit of

the life of the spirit. Only through somebody's favour are we left until the next summer. If we do

not bear fruit, we shall perish like the one who built the barns, like the Galileans, like the

eighteen, men killed by the tower, and like all who do not bear fruit, dying an everlasting death.

In order to understand this, no wisdom is needed, for anybody can see it. Not only in domestic

matters, but in everything which is going on in the world we are able to reflect and guess in

advance. If the wind is from the west, we say, It is going to rain, and so it happens. How is this ?

The weather we can predict, and yet we cannot foresee that we shall all die and perish, and that

the only salvation for us is the life of the spirit, the doing of its will.

And a great multitude went with Jesus, and he once

more said to all, He who wants to be my disciple must esteem little his father, mother, wife,

children, brothers, sisters, and all his property, and must at all times be prepared for everything.

Only he who does what I am doing follows my teaching, and only that man will be saved from

death.

For each man will figure out, before he begins anything, whether what he is doing is profitable,

and if it is, he will do it; and if not, he gives it up. Every man who builds a house first sits down

and figures out how much money he needs, how much he has, and whether he will have

enough with which to finish building it, lest he begin and do not finish it, and men laugh at him.

Even so he who wants to live the carnal life must first figure out whether he can finish what he

has begun.

Every king, who wants to wage war, first considers whether he can go with ten thousand against

twenty thousand. If he figures out that he cannot, he will send messengers to make peace, and

will give up the idea of fighting. So let each man, before giving himself up to the carnal life,

consider whether he can wage war against death, or whether death is stronger than he. And if it

is, let him make peace with it in advance.

Thus every one of you must first settle with what he considers to be his own, his family, his

money, his possessions, and when he figures out what advantage he will derive from them, and

understands that there is none, he will be able to be my disciple, and not before.

The kingdom of heaven does not come in an external manner. Of the kingdom of heaven, which

saves from death, we cannot say that it has come, or that it will come; that it is here, or there; it

is within you, in your souls.

For, if the time comes and you want to find salvation in life and you look for it in a certain time,

you will not find it. And if they will tell you, Salvation is here, salvation is there, do not look for it

anywhere, but within yourselves, for salvation is sudden, like lightning, and everywhere; there is

no time and space for it, — it is in your souls.

And as salvation was for Noah and for Lot, so it is always for the son of man. Life remains the

same for all men: all eat and drink and get married, but some perish, and others are saved.

There was an evil judge, who feared neither God nor man, and a poor widow begged him; but

.the judge did not decide in her favour. The widow begged the judge day and night. The unjust

judge said, What shall I do? I will decide as the widow wishes, for she gives me no rest. .

You must understand that even the unjust judge did what the widow asked him to do. How,

then, will the Father refuse to do what men ask him for day and night without cessation ?

But besides the Father there is the son of man who is seeking the truth, and we cannot fail to believe in him.

He who will give up the false, temporal wealth for the true life according to the will of the Father

will do the same as did the wise steward.

A man was a steward of a rich master; he saw that his master would discharge him, and that he

would be left without bread and without a home.

And the steward said to himself, This is what I will do: I will quietly distribute the master's goods

to the peasants and will cut down their debts; then, if the master sends me away, the peasants

will remember the good I have done to them, and will not abandon me.

And so the steward did. He called up the peasants, those who were in debt to the master, and

rewrote their bills. Instead of one hundred he wrote fifty, and instead of sixty he wrote twenty,

and so he did to all.

And the master heard of it, and said to himself, Indeed, he has done wisely, for else he would

have to go a-begging. He has caused me a loss, but he has calculated well, for in the carnal life

we all understand how to calculate correctly, but in the life of the spirit we do not wish to

comprehend.

Even so we must do with the unjust wealth: we must give it away in order to

receive the life of

the spirit. If we shall regret giving up such trifles as wealth for the life of the spirit, it will not be

given to us. If we do not give up the false wealth, our own life will not be given to us. It is

impossible to serve at once two masters, God and wealth, — the will of God and our own will.

Either the one, or the other.

When the Orthodox heard that, they laughed at Jesus, for they love wealth.

And he said to them, You think that because men respect you for your riches, you are really

respected. No, God does not look without, but within, into the heart. What is high before men is

insignificant before God. The kingdom of God is now on earth, and great are they who enter into

it; but it is not the rich, but the poor, who enter. That has always been so according to your law,

and according to Moses and the prophets. Hear what the rich and the poor are according to

your faith.

There was a rich man. He dressed himself in costly garments and made merry every day. And

there was a vagrant named Lazarus, who was scurfy. And Lazarus came into the yard of the

rich man, thinking that he might get the remnants from the rich man's table, but he did not get

even those; for the rich man's dogs ate the remnants clean and even licked the wounds of

Lazarus.

And both Lazarus and the rich man died. In hell the rich man saw Abraham a long way off, and

Lazarus the scurfy was sitting with him.

The rich man said, Father Abraham, Lazarus the scurfy is sitting with thee: he used to wallow at

the gate of my house. I dare not trouble thee. Send Lazarus the scurfy to me: let him dip his

finger in water and refresh my throat, for I am burning in fire. But Abraham said, Why should I

send Lazarus to thee, in hell ? Thou hadst everything thou wantedst in the other world, while

Lazarus saw nothing but sorrow there. It is time for him to have pleasure now. Even if he

wanted to do it for thee, he cannot, for between you and us there is a great gulf, and it is

impossible to cross it. We are living, but you are dead.

Then the rich man said, Father Abraham, at least send Lazarus the scurfy to my house: I have

five brothers, and I am sorry for them: let him tell them how dangerous wealth is, or else they

will have to suffer torment themselves. But Abraham said, They know, as it is, that wealth is dangerous, for Moses and all the prophets have told them that.

But the rich man said, Still it would be better if one risen from the dead came to

them, for that

would bring them to their senses. And Abraham said, If they do not listen to Moses and the

prophets, they will not listen to one risen from the dead.

All know that we should divide with our brother and do good to men, and the whole law of

Moses and all the prophets say nothing else. You know it, but do not wish to do it, because you

love wealth.

And a rich Orthodox chief went up to Jesus, and said to him, Thou art a good teacher! Tell me

what I must do that I may receive eternal life.

Jesus said, Why 'dost thou call me good? Good is only the Father. If thou wishest to receive

life, do the commandments.

The chief said, There are many commandments; which must I keep? Jesus said, Do not kill, do

not commit debauchery, do not steal, do not lie, and also honour thy Father and do his will, and

love thy neighbour as thyself.

And the Orthodox chief said, All these commandments I have been keeping from childhood; but

I ask what else I must do according to thy teaching.

Jesus looked at him, at his rich garments, and he smiled and said, Thou lackest one little thing:

thou hast not fulfilled what thou sayest. If thou wishest to do these commandments, Do not kill,

do not commit debauchery, do not steal, do not lie, and, above all, the commandment, Love thy

neighbour as thyself, go and sell thy estate and give it to the poor, and then thou wilt do the will

of the Father.

When the chief heard this, he frowned and went away, for he was sorry to part from his

possessions.

And Jesus said to his disciples, You see that it is absolutely impossible to be rich and do the will

of the Father.

The disciples were frightened at these words. But Jesus repeated, and said, Yes, children, he

who has wealth cannot be in the will of God. Much easier it is for a camel to pass through the

eye of a needle than for a rich man to do the will of the Father.

And they were frightened more than before, and said, If so, it is impossible to save one's life.

And he said, To a man it seems impossible to save one's life without possessions, but God will

save a man without possessions.

One day Jesus happened to pass through the town of Jericho. In this city there was a rich

farmer of taxes named Zaccheus. This Zaccheus had heard of Jesus' teaching and

believed in

it. When he heard that Jesus was in Jericho, he wanted to see him. There were so many people

al about him, that it was not possible to make one's way through them.

Then he ran forward and climbed a tree, that he might see Jesus as he passed by.

And indeed, as Jesus went by, he saw Zaccheus, and, having learned that Zaccheus believed

in his teaching, he said, Climb down from the tree and go home, and I will go to thy house.

Zaccheus climbed down, ran home, and prepared a reception for Jesus.

The people began to judge and to say about Jesus, He has gone into the house of a tax-

collector, a rascal.

In the meantime Zaccheus said to Jesus, Sir, this is what I will do: I will give half of my

possessions to the poor, and from the rest I will pay all whom I have injured.

And Jesus said, Now thou art saved. Thou wert dead, and art alive; thou wert lost, and hast

found thyself, for thou hast done like Abraham, when he wished to sacrifice his son, in order to

show his faith. For the whole life of man consists in finding and saving what is perishing in one's

soul.

It is impossible to measure a sacrifice by its size. One day Jesus and his disciples happened to

sit opposite a money-box. Men were placing what they had into the box for God.
And rich men

walked up to the box, and placed a great deal in it. And then a poor widow came
up and placed

two mites in it.

And Jesus pointed to her, and said to his disciples, you saw the poor widow put
in two mites:

she has put in more than the rest, for the others put in what they did not need for
life, while she

put in everything she had, her whole life.

Jesus happened to be in the house of Simon the leper. And a woman entered the
house. This

woman had a pitcher with precious oil worth three hundred pence.

Jesus said to his disciples that his death was near. When the woman heard this,
she took pity

on Jesus, and wanted to show him her love and anoint his head with oil. And she
forgot

everything, how much her oil cost, and broke the pitcher, and anointed his head
and feet, and

spilled all the oil.

And the disciples began to judge her, saying that she had done badly. And Judas,
the one who

later betrayed Jesus, said, How much has been wasted !

The oil could have been sold for three hundred pence, and so many poor might
have profited by

it. And the disciples began to rebuke the woman, and she was troubled and did

not know

whether she had done right or wrong.

Then Jesus said to them, In vain do you trouble the woman, for she has truly done well. Why do

you mention the poor ? If you wish to do good to the poor, do it: they are always present, so

there is no need of speaking of them. If you pity the poor, go and pity them and do good to

them. She has pitied me and has done me a real good, for she has given me everything which

she had. Who of you can tell what is needed, and what not ? How do you know that it was* not

necessary to pour the oil over me ? She has at least poured oil over me, so as to prepare my

body for burial, and so it is necessary. She has truly done the will of the Father: she forgot

herself and pitied another; she forgot the carnal calculation and gave away everything which

she had.

END BOOK ONE.

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Chapter VII end.

THE PROOF OF THE TRUTH OF THE TEACHING

To receive the true life one must give up the carnal life. The carnal life is the food for the true

life. The teaching of Jesus consists in giving up the carnal life for the true life.

The Pharisees and learned men began to ask Jesus, Thou sayest that it is necessary to give up the carnal life and all its pleasures in order to receive the true life, but how dost thou prove this ?

And Jesus groaned from pity for these men. Their asking for proofs showed him that they did

not understand him. And he said, Men want proofs, and proofs cannot be given to them.

And he said to them, What carnal proofs do you want for a non-carnal life ? Have you no proofs

for everything which you know ? Looking at the beautiful evening glow you assume that next

day there will be fair weather, and when it looks gloomy in the morning, you assume that it will

rain. You have no proofs, but you judge of this from the appearance of the sky, and you are able

to draw your conclusions. Why, then, do you not draw the same correct conclusions in regard to

yourselves ? If you judged just as correctly about yourselves as you do about the signs of the

weather, you would know that just as certainly as the west wind brings rain, death follows after

the temporal life.

And so there is no other proof, and there can be none, for the proof of my teaching, except the

teaching itself.

There can be no proofs of the comprehension.

The southern queen went to see Solomon, not to ask for proofs, but to listen to his wisdom. The

Ninevites did not ask Jonah for proofs, but listened to his teaching, and were converted; even so

you must do, and must not ask for any proofs.

After this the Jews tried to sentence Jesus to death, and Jesus went into Galilee, and there lived

with his relatives.

There came the Jewish feast of the tabernacles.

The brothers of Jesus got ready to go to the feast, and asked Jesus to go with them. They did

not believe in his teaching, and said to him, Thou sayest that the Jewish way of serving God is

not right, and that thou knowest the right way of serving him with deeds. If thou truly believest

that none but thee know the true service of God, go with us to the feast, for a large multitude will

be there. There thou canst announce in the presence of the whole people that the teaching of

Moses is false. If all of them will believe thee, all thy disciples will see that thou art right. What is

the sense in con-

cealing thyself ? Thou sayest that our service is wrong, that thou knowest the true way of

serving God, so show it to all

And Jesus said to them, For you there is a special time and place for serving God; but I have no

such special time and place. I always and everywhere work for God. It is this that I show people:

I show them that their service of God is false, and for this they hate me. Go yourselves to the

feast, and I will go whenever I wish.

And the brothers went away, but he remained at home; later he went to the feast when it was

half over.

The Jews were troubled, because he did not honour their holiday and did not come. And they

disputed a great deal about his teaching: some said that he was telling the truth; and others said

that he only agitated the people.

In the middle of the holiday Jesus entered the temple and began to teach the people, saying

that their worship was false, and that God must be worshipped not in the temple and with

sacrifices, but in the spirit and with works. All listened to him and marvelled at his wisdom.

And Jesus, hearing that they marvelled at his wisdom, said to them, My wisdom consists in this,

that I teach what I know from my Father. My teaching consists in doing the will of the spirit,

which gives me life. He who does this will know that it is the truth, for he will

not do what seems good to him, but what seems good to the spirit which lives within him. Your law of Moses is not

the eternal law, and so those who follow it do not execute the eternal law, and do wrong and

what is untrue. I teach you to do the one will, and in my teaching there can be no contradiction,

but your written law of Moses is all filled with contradictions. I give you a teaching, with which

man stands higher than all decrees and finds the law within himself.

And many said, They have said that he is a false prophet, and he has been condemning the

law, and yet no one says anything to him. Maybe he is indeed real, and maybe the rulers have

acknowledged him. There is one thing, however, which does not fit: it is said that when he who

is sent by God shall come, no one will know whence he comes, but we know whence he comes,

and we know his whole family.

The people did not understand his teaching, and kept looking for external proofs.

Then Jesus said to them, You know whence I come in a carnal way, but you do not know

whence I come in the spirit. You do not know him from whom I come in the spirit, and it is only

him that you ought to know. If I said that I am Christ, you would believe me as a man, but you

would not believe God who is in me and in you. You must believe in the one

God. I am here

among you for a brief space of time: I show you the way of salvation, the return to that source of

life from which I came. And you ask me for proofs and want to condemn me. If you do not know

the way, you will certainly not find me when I am gone. You must not condemn me, but follow

me. He who will do what I say will find out whether what I say is true or not. He for whom the life

of the flesh has not become the food of the spirit, who does not seek the truth, as the thirsty

person seeks water, cannot understand me. But he who thirsts for water may follow me and

drink. And he who will believe in my teaching will receive the true life. He will receive the life of

the spirit.

And many believed in his teaching, and said, What he says is true and from God. Others did not

understand him, and kept looking in the prophecies for proofs of his being sent by God. And

many disputed with him, but could not prevail against him. The Pharisees and learned men sent

their assistants to contend with him. But their

assistants returned to them, saying, We can do nothing with him.

And the high priests said, Why did you not accuse him ?

And they replied, Never has a man spoken like him.

Then the Pharisees said, It does not mean anything, that you cannot prevail against him, and

that the people believe in his teaching. We do not believe, and none of the rulers believe, but

the accursed people are always stupid and ignorant.

And Jesus said to the Pharisees, There can be no proofs of the truth of my teaching, just as

there can be no illumination of the light. My teaching is the true light, that light when men see

what is good and what bad, and so it is impossible to prove my teaching: it proves everything

else. He who will follow me will not be in the dark, but with him life and light is the same.

But the Pharisees still demanded proofs of the truth of his teaching, and said, Thou art the only

one who says this.

And he replied to them, If I am the only one who says this, I am still in the right, for I know

whence I come and whither I go. Besides, not I alone teach this, but the Father, my spirit,

teaches it also. But you do not know him, and so this proves the falseness of your teaching. You

do not know whence you come and whither you go. I am leading you, but, instead of following

me, you discuss who I am; and so you cannot come to salvation and to life, to which I lead you.

And you will perish, if you abide in this error and do not follow me.

And the Jews asked, Who art thou ?

He said, I am not any special man; as a man I am nothing; but, above all, I am what I tell you: I

am the way and the truth, — I am the comprehension. And when you make the spirit of the son

of man your God, you will know what I am, because what I do and say

is not from me, as a man, but what my Father has taught me.

Only he who keeps the comprehension, who does the will of the Father, can be taught by me.

To comprehend the truth, it is necessary to do good. He who does evil loves the darkness and

goes toward it; he who does good goes toward the light. And so, in order to understand my

teaching, it is necessary to do good. He who will do good will know the truth, and he who will

know the truth will be free from evil and from death; for every man who errs becomes the slave

of his error.

And as the slave does not always live in the house of his master, while the master's son is

always there, even so a man, who errs in life and becomes the slave of his error, does not live

for ever, but dies. Only he who is in the truth lives for ever. But the truth consists in being a son,

and not a slave. And so, if you err, you will be slaves, and you will die; but if

you abide in the

truth, you will be free sons, and will live.

You say of yourselves that you are the children of Abraham, and that you know the truth; and

yet you want to kill me, because I tell you the truth. Abraham did not do so. If you wish to do

this, — to kill a man, you are not the sons of God the Father, and you do not serve him, but

serve your father. You are not with me the sons of the same Father: you are the slaves of error,

and its sons. If you had the same Father with me, you would love me, for I, too, come from God.

I was not bom of myself, but am also from God. For this reason you do not understand my

words, and the comprehension has no place in you. If I am from the Father, and you are from

the same Father, you cannot wish to kill me. But since you wish to kill me, we are not of one

Father. I am from God, but you are from the devil. You want to do the will of your father: he has

always been a murderer and liar, and there is no truth in him. If he, the

devil, says anything, he says his own personal matters, and not what is common to all, and he is

the father of lying and error; and so you are the slaves of error, and his children.

You see how easy it is to accuse you of error. If I err, accuse me; but if there is no error, why do

you not believe me?

And the Jews began to scold him, and said that he was mad.

He said, I am not mad, but honour my Father, and you want to kill me, the son of the Father;

consequently you are not my brothers, but children of another father. Not I affirm that I am right,

but the truth speaks for me. And so I repeat to you, He who will grasp and execute my teaching

will not see death.

And the Jews said, Do we not tell the truth, when we say that he is a mad Samaritan ? Thou

accusest thyself. The prophets are dead ; Abraham is dead, and thou sayest that he who will

execute thy teaching will not see death. Abraham is dead, and thou wilt not die! Or art thou

greater than Abraham ?

The Jews kept discussing whether he, Jesus of Galilee, was an important prophet or not, and

forgot everything which he had said, and that he said nothing of himself as a man, but spoke of

the spirit of God which was within him.

And Jesus said, I make nothing of myself. If I spoke of what seems good to me, everything I say would be without meaning; but there is a beginning of all things, which you call God, and of him

I speak. You have not known the true God, but I know him. I cannot help saying that I know him.

I should be a liar, such as you are, if I said that I did not know him. I know him, and I know his

will, and do it. Your father Abraham is holy for this reason only, that he saw my comprehension

and rejoiced in it.

The Jews said, Thou art thirty years old; how could you have lived in the days of Abraham ?

He said, Before Abraham was, I was, that I, of whom I have told you, — the comprehension.

The Jews picked up stones, to stone him, but he went away from them.

I am the light of the world. He who will follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light

of life. If a man does not see the light, neither his parents, nor he, are to blame; but if he has

light, it is his duty to shine for others. While we are in the world, we are the light of the world. If

we see men who are deprived of light, we reveal the light to them from the principle which has

produced us. And if a man sees the light, he will all be changed so that no one can tell him. A

man remains the same man ; but there is this difference that, having learned that he is a son of

God, he receives the light and sees what he never saw before.

A man who did not see the light and has come to see it can say nothing as to whether it is true

that he has regained his sight; all he can say is, I am regenerated; I am different

from what I

was; before this I was blind and did not see the true good, hut now I see it. I do not know how I

came to see, but I think that he who revealed the light to me is a man from God.

And no matter how much they may say to a man who has seen the light, that it is not the true

light; that he must pray to another God, the one he does not see; that he who gave him the light

is mistaken, the man will not believe it. He will say, I know nothing about your God, nor whether

the man who opened my eyes was mistaken, or not; but I know that formerly I did not see, and

now I see.

And no matter how much you may ask such a man how his eyes were opened, he will tell you

the same. They were opened in this way, that I found out that the

beginning of my life is the spirit, and, having learned this, I was regenerated. No matter how

much you may say that the law of Moses is the true law of God; that God himself revealed it to

Moses; that God communes with the saints, and that he who opened his eyes is a sinner, the

man will repeat the one answer, I know nothing about all that, but I know that I was blind, and

now I see. And I know that he who opened my eyes is from God. For, if he were not from God,

he could not do it.

Such a man trusts only in the spirit of the son of God, which is in him, and that is all he needs.

And Jesus said, The teaching separates men: the blind receive their sight, and those who think

that they see become blind. If men do not see the light from their birth, they are not to blame,

and they may receive their sight. Only those who affirm that they see, when they see nothing,

are to blame indeed.

And the Jews began to dispute. Some said, He is simply mad; and others said, A madman

cannot open men's eyes.

Men abandon themselves to my teaching, not because I prove it to them: it is impossible to

prove the truth, but the truth proves everything else. But people abandon themselves to my

teaching, because it is one, and familiar to people, and promises them life. My teaching is for

people what the familiar voice of the shepherd is for the sheep, when he enters to them by the

door, and gathers them, to drive them into the pasture. But nobody believes your teaching,

because it is foreign to men, and men see in it your lusts. It is for men what for the sheep is the

sight of a man who does not enter by the door, but climbs over the enclosure: the

sheep do not

know him, and they feel that he is a robber.

My teaching is the only true one, as one door is for the sheep. All your teachings of the law of

Moses are a lie, — as the thieves and robbers are lies for the sheep.

He who abandons himself to my teaching will find the true life, just as the sheep will go out and

find food, if they follow the shepherd. For a thief comes only to steal, rob, and destroy, while a

shepherd comes to feed and give life. And it is only my teaching which promises the true life.

The shepherds are masters, whose lives are formed by the sheep and who give their lives for

the sheep; they are true shepherds. But there are hirelings, who do not trouble themselves

about the sheep, because they are hirelings, and the sheep are not their own, such as, when a

wolf comes, forsake their sheep, and these are not true shepherds. Even so there are untrue

teachers, such as have no thought for the life of men, and true teachers, such as give their

souls for the life of men. I am such a teacher.

My teaching consists in giving the life for other men. No one takes it from me, but I of my own

will give it for men, in order that I may receive the true life. This commandment I received from

my Father. And as the Father knows me, so I know the Father, and so I lay my life down for the

sake of men. And so the Father loves me, for I fulfil his commandments.

And all men, not only here and now, but all men, will understand my voice and will all come

together, and will be one, and the teaching will be one.

And the Jews surrounded him, and said, Everything which thou sayest is hard to understand

and does not agree with our Scripture. Do not torment us, but tell us outright, Art thou that

Messiah who according to our books is to come into the world ?

And Jesus replied to them, I have already told you who I am. I am what I have told you; but you

do not believe my words. Believe my works, — the life in God, which I lead, — you will

understand by them who I am, and wherefore I have come. But you do not

believe, for you do not follow me. He who walks in my path and does what I say understands

me. And he who understands my teaching and fulfils it will receive the true life. My Father united

them with me, and nobody can sever them. I and the Father are one.

And the Jews were offended by this, and laid hold of stones to stone him.

But he said to them, I have shown you much good through my Father, so for what deed do you

want to

stone me?

They said, Not for a good deed do we wish to stone thee, but because thou, a man, makest

thyself a God.

And Jesus answered them, But the same is said in your Scripture: it says that God himself said

to the bad rulers, You are gods. If vicious people were called gods, why should you consider it a

blasphemy to call God that which God, loving it, sent into the world ? Every man according to

the spirit is a son of God. If I do not live in godly fashion, do not believe that I am a son of God;

but if I do, believe according to my life that I am in God. And then you will understand that God

is in me, and I am in God, that I and the Father are one.

And Jesus said, My teaching is the awakening of life. He who believes in my teaching retains

his life, though he dies carnally. He who lives does not die.

And the Jews did not know what to do with him, and were not able to sentence him.

And he went once more beyond the Jordan, and remained there. And many believed in his

teaching, and said that it was as true as John's teaching. And so many believed in his teaching.

And Jesus once asked his disciples, and said, Tell me how people understand my teaching

about the son of God and the son of man.

They said, Some understand it like John's teaching; others, like the prophecy of Elijah; others

again say that

it resembles the teaching of Jeremiah, and take you to be a prophet.

He said, And how do you understand my teaching? And Simon Peter said to him, In my opinion

thy teaching consists in this, that thou art the chosen son of God, of life. Thou teachest that God

is the life in man.

And Jesus said to him, Happy thou art, Simon, to have understood this. No man could have

revealed this to thee, for God within thee has revealed it to thee. Not carnal reflection and not I

with my words, but God, my Father, has directly revealed it to thee.

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Chapter VIII end.

THERE IS NO OTHER LIFE

You will be mendicants and vagrants, you will be humbled. But he who loves father or mother,

son or daughter, more than me, has not comprehended my teaching. He who is not prepared for

all carnal sufferings has not understood me. He who acquires everything which is best for the

carnal life will lose the true life. And he who loses the carnal life will receive the

true life.

In response to these words Peter said to him, That is true, and we have listened to you, and

have given up all cares and all property, and have become vagrants, and have followed thee.

What will be our reward ?

Jesus said to them, Thou knowest thyself what thou hast given up; and every man who gives up

his family, sisters, brothers, father, mother, wife, children, and property, and follows my teaching

of the true good, will he not receive a hundred times more even in this life, now, sisters, and

brothers, and fields, and everything which he needs ? and besides, in this life, he receives the

life outside of time. But thou art mistaken in supposing that thou wilt get a reward for what thou

hast done. There are no rewards in the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is the aim and the

reward. In the kingdom of God all are equal, and there are no first, and no last.

The kingdom of God is like this: A master went out in the morning to hire labourers for the

garden. He

hired them at a penny a day, and brought them to the garden, where he set them to work.

And he went out again at noontime, and hired more labourers, and sent them to the garden to

work. And he agreed with all of them to give them a penny.

When the time for paying came, the master commanded that all the labourers be paid an equal

amount, first those who came last, and then those who came first.

When the first saw that the last were getting a penny each, they thought that they would get

more. But the first received but a penny each. And they murmured, and said, How is this ? They

have done but one plot, and we have done all four, and yet we are paid the same: this is not fair.

And the master came up, and said, Why do you grumble ? Have I not treated you right ? I have

paid to you as much as we agreed upon. Take what belongs to you, and go. If I want to pay the

last as much as I have paid you, have I not the right to do so? Or are you envious, because you

see that I am good ?

In the kingdom of God there are no first and no last, — all are the same. He who does the will of

God and gives up the carnal life has the life of the spirit. And those who fulfil it are in the will of

God. Nobody else can bring man nearer to the will of God. The kingdom of God is taken by

assault.

One day, two of the disciples, James and John, came up to Jesus, saying, Teacher, promise us

that thou wilt do for us what we shall ask thee.

He said, What do you wish ?

They said, We want to be as thou art.

And Jesus said to them, You ask what is not in my power. You can live like me, and be

regenerated in spirit like me, but it is not in my power to make you like myself. All men are

variously born, and to each a dif-

ferent degree of the comprehension is given, but all may

alike do the will of God and receive life.

When the other disciples heard this, they grew angry at the two brothers, because they wanted

to be like the teacher, and the eldest of the disciples.

But Jesus called them up, and said, If you, brothers James and John, asked me to make you

like myself, in order to be the leading disciples, you were in error; if you, the other disciples, are

angry at them, because these two want to be of greater authority than you, you, too, are in error.

Only in the world do they count by kings and rulers, who are of greater authority, to rule the

nations; but among you there can be no greater and no smaller. In order that one of you may be

greater than another, he must be a servant to all, for the teaching of the son of man consists

even in this, that he does not live to be ministered to, but to minister to all, and that we should

give up our life as a ransom for the life of the spirit. God the spirit seeks the salvation of him who

perishes. God wishes the salvation of men, and rejoices at it, as rejoices the shepherd, when he

has found his lost sheep. And when one has been lost, he leaves the ninety-nine, and goes to

save the one which is lost. And if a woman loses a penny, she will sweep her whole house, until

she finds it. God loves what perishes and calls it to himself.

And he told them another parable, saying that those who lived in the will of God should not exalt

themselves. He said, If thou art called to a dinner, do not seat thyself in the front corner, lest

some one more honoured should come, and the host say to thee, Go away from there, and let

him sit down who is better than thou; and then thou wilt be put to shame. Rather seat thyself in

the lowest place, for then the host will find thee and call thee to the place of honour, and thou

wilt be honoured.

Even thus there is no place of pride in the kingdom of

God. He who exalts himself, by that very act abases himself, and he who humbles himself

(considers himself unworthy), by that very act raises himself in the kingdom of

God.

A man had two sons. The younger one said, Father, give me my portion. And the father gave it

to him.

The younger son took his portion and went to a foreign country, where he squandered his

possessions, and fell into misery. And he became a swineherd in that foreign land. And he

suffered so much hunger that he ate the acorns with the swine. And one day he reflected on his

life, and said to himself, Why did I leave my father's house? my father has plenty of everything.

At my father's the labourers get their fill to eat, while I eat the same food as the swine. I will go

to my father, fall down before his feet, and say, Father, I have sinned before thee; I am not

worthy of being thy son, so take me as a labourer.

So he thought, and went to his father. And as he was coming near to the house, and his father

saw him in the distance, he ran to meet his son, and embraced him, and began to kiss him.

And the son said, Father, I have sinned before thee, I am not worthy of being thy son.

But the father would not listen to him, and said to the servants, Go and bring at once the best

raiment, and the best shoes, and dress him. And run and catch the fatted calf and

kill it: we shall

rejoice, because this son of mine was dead, and has been made alive. He was lost, and now he

has been found.

The elder brother was returning from the field, and as he came near the house he heard them

singing at home. He called up a boy, and asked him, What merriment is this in our house ?

And the boy said, Hast thou not heard ? Thy brother has returned, and thy father is rejoicing,

and has com-

manded that the fatted calf be killed, to make merry at the return of his son.

The elder brother was angry, and did not go into the house. But the father came out to him, and

called him.

Father, I have worked for thee these many years, and have not disobeyed thee, but thou hast

never killed a calf for me. My younger brother left the house and spent all his portion with

drunkards, and thou hast ordered the fatted calf to be killed for him.

And the father said, Thou art always with me, and everything I have is thine. How can I help

lejoicing, since thy brother was dead, and has come to life; he was lost, and has been found.

Even thus your Father in heaven does not want a single man, not even the least worthy, to be

lost, but wants him to live.

The life of men, who do not understand that they are not living in this world that they may eat

and drink and make merry, but that they may all their life work for God, is like this: a master

planted a garden, got it into good shape, and did everything that it might bring forth fruits. And

he sent labourers into the garden, to work, to gather the fruits, and to pay him for the garden

according to the agreement.

This master is God, the garden is the world. The labourers are men. God created the world and

sent men into it that they might give to God what is God's, the comprehension of life, which he

has placed in them. The time came, and the master sent his servant to collect the rent. God is in

the souls of men, continually speaking to them of what they ought to do for him, and continually

calling them.

The labourers drove away the messenger of the master without anything, and continued to live,

imagining that it was their own garden, and that they were settled in it for their own sakes. Men

have driven away the admoni-

tion of the will of God, and continue to live, imagining that they are living for themselves, for the

pleasures of the carnal life.

Then the master sent more of his favourites, and his son, to remind the labourers of their duty.

But the labourers entirely lost their reason and imagined that if they killed the master's son, who

reminded them of the fact that the garden was not theirs, they would be left in peace, and so

they killed him. Men do not like to be reminded of the spirit which dwells within them and shows

them that it is eternal, while they are not, and they have killed, as much as they could, the

consciousness of the spirit, wrapped it in a handkerchief, and hid in the ground the talent which

was given to them.

What was the master to do ? Only this, to drive the labourers away, and to send others in their

place. What is God to do ? To sow while there is any fruit. And this he does. Men have not

comprehended that the consciousness of the spirit, which is in them, and which they are hiding,

because it interferes with them, is the very comprehension which is the foundation of life. They

reject the very stone by which everything is supported. And those who will not take the spirit as

the foundation of life, do not enter into the kingdom of God and do not receive life. In order to

receive life and the kingdom of God, a man must remember his situation, not wait for rewards,

but feel himself under obligations.

Then the disciples said to Jesus, Increase our faith. Tell us something which will make us

believe more firmly in the life of the spirit so that we may not regret the life of the flesh. See how

much we must give away, and it is necessary to give up everything for the life of the spirit. And

thou sayest thyself that there is no reward.

And to this Jesus replied, If your faith were as strong as is your faith that out of a birch seed

there will grow up a large tree, you would believe that within you there

is the only germ of the life of the spirit, out of which grows the true life. Faith does not consist in

believing in something miraculous, but in understanding our condition and that in which our

salvation is. If thou understandest thy condition, thou wilt not be waiting for rewards, but wilt

work to retain what has been given thee. If thou comest from the field with thy labourer, thou wilt

not seat him at the table, but wilt command him to put away the cattle and get thy supper ready,

and only then wilt thou say to him, Eat and drink. Thou dost not thank the labourer for doing his

duty. And the labourer is not offended, but works and waits for his due.

Even thus do what is right, and think that you are worthless labourers, and have done only what

was right, and wait for no reward. The care ought to be, not about receiving the reward, but

about not being a guilty and bad labourer. We must not have a thought for this, that we believe

that there will be a reward and that there will be life, — this cannot be otherwise; but we must

have a thought for this, that we may not lose this life, and that we may not forget that it is given

to us, that we may bring forth its fruits and do the will of God. We must not think of what we

have accomplished, and that a reward is coming to us.

Only then will you understand that there is a kingdom of God, of which I tell you, and that this

kingdom of God is the only salvation from death, and will not appear in such a way as to be

visible. Of the kingdom of God which saves from death we cannot say, Here it has come, or, It

will come ; Here it is, or, There it is. It is within you, in your soul: and so, if the time ever comes

that you wish to find salvation in life, you will be searching for it in some time, and you will not

find it. And if they tell you, Salvation is here, salvation is there, do not seek this salvation

anywhere but within you; for salva-

tion is like lightning, sudden, and for it there is no time, and there is no death, — it is within you.

And as was salvation for Noah, and as it was for Lot, such it always is for the son of man. Life remains the same for all men : all eat, drink, marry, but when the flood comes, and the rain from

heaven, when carnal death comes, some perish, and others are saved. When the kingdom of

God within you shall come, each one of you will no longer think of the carnal; and do not look

around, like Lot's wife. It is impossible for you to plough, if you look back. Remember only the

present.

Then the disciples asked how they could tell that the day of salvation had come and that we had

attained eternal life.

And Jesus replied to them, Nobody can know when and where this is going to happen to man. It

is impossible to show and prove it. The one thing which we can know is that, when this takes

place in you, you will feel the true life. What will happen to you, is what happens to a tree in the

spring: it was dead, and now you see the branches growing soft, and the buds filling up, and the

leaves growing. It is this that you will feel in yourselves. You will feel in yourselves life which

proceeds from you. When you feel this, you may know that the kingdom of God and the day of

salvation are near. Consequently, have no thought for the carnal life. Seek only to be in the will

of God, — everything else will come of itself.

And he said that it was necessary to wish for this one thing only, and not to lose courage.

And the disciples said, Teach us to pray.

And he said, Your prayer shall be this only: Father, thy spirit be holy in us, thy will be in us. Let

us feed on the carnal life for the life of the spirit. Do not importune us, asking for what we owe

thee, as we will not importune those who are indebted to us. Have no accounting with us.

If a son asks his father for bread, his father will certainly not give him a stone; nor will he give

him a snake instead of a fish. If we, evil men, give to our children what is good, and not what is

bad for them; how then will our Father, from whom we come, the Father of the spirit, refuse us

that spirit, for which alone we ask him ? Not only no father, but no stranger can refuse another,

when he is persistently asked to give him a thing. If thou goest at midnight to thy neighbour to

ask him for bread, in order to entertain thy guest, thou knowest that, if not out of friendship,

certainly out of shame, he will give thee what thou wantest, if thou askest him persistently. If

thou wilt ask, thou wilt receive; if thou wilt knock, it will be opened to thee.
Certainly you cannot

expect God to give you of the spirit, which saves from death, if you do not seek,
and ask him.

And Jesus said, There was an evil judge, who feared neither God nor men. And a
poor widow

begged him, but he would not pass judgment. And the widow clung to the judge
day and night,

begging him all the time. And the judge said, What can I do ? I will settle the
case as the widow

wants me to, or else she will give me no rest.

Consider this, that, though the judge was unrighteous, he did it. How then will
God refuse to do

what they pray to him for day and night ? If there is God, he will do it. If there is
no God, and

instead of God there is an unrighteous judge, there is still the son of man, who is
seeking truth,

and we cannot help but believe in him. Seek the kingdom of God and his truth at
all times, in

every place, and all else will come of itself. Do not trouble yourselves about the
future, and try

only to avoid the present evil.

Be always ready, like servants waiting for the master, to open the door, the
moment he comes.

The servants do not know when he will return, whether early or late, and must
always be ready.

And if they meet the master and have done his will, they fare well. The same is in life: always, at

every minute of the present, we must live the life of the spirit, without thinking of the past and

the future, and without saying to ourselves, I will do this or that at such and such a time. If the master knew when the thief would come, he would not sleep; even thus you must not sleep,

because for the son of man there is no time: he lives only in the present, and does not know

when the beginning and the end of his life are. Our life is like the life of a slave whom the master

left as a watchman in his house. Happy is the slave who always does the will of his master. But

if he says, My master will not come back immediately, and forgets his master's business, the

master will return unawares, and will drive him away. And so do not lose your courage, but

always live in the spirit in the present. For life there is no time.

Look after yourselves, lest you burden and bedim yourselves with too much eating and drinking

and with cares, and lose the time of salvation. The time of salvation is thrown over you like a

snare, — it is always here. And so always live the life of the son of man.

The kingdom of heaven is like this: Ten maidens went out with their lamps to meet the

bridegroom. Five of them were wise, and five foolish. The foolish girls took the lamps, but forgot

the oil, while the wise maidens took both the lamps and a supply of oil. As they were waiting for

the bridegroom, they fell asleep.

When the bridegroom came near, the foolish maidens saw that they did not have enough oil;

they begged the wise girls for some and went to buy it; while they were gone, the bridegroom

came, and the wise maidens, who had oil, went in with him, and the doors were closed. The

only reason the maidens had to go out was to meet the bridegroom with their lamps, and they

had forgotten that what was important was that the lamps should burn at the proper time. But

that they should burn then, it was necessary for them to have burned all the time. Life is given

only for the purpose of exalting the son of man, and the son of man is always; he is not in time,

and so we must serve him outside of time, in the present only. And so make an effort, do works,

that you may enter into the life of the spirit; if you make no effort, you will not enter into it.

You will say, We have said this and that, but you will not do good deeds, and so there will not be

the whole life: for the son of man in his power will give to each what he has done.

Men are all divided according to their manner of serving the son of man. By their works they are

divided into two classes, as a flock of sheep is separated from the goats. Some will live, and

others will die. Those who have served the son of man will receive what belonged to them from

the beginning of the world, — the life which they have preserved. But they have preserved their

life by serving the son of man: they have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, received the

stranger, visited the prisoner. Some have lived the life of the son of man, feeling that he is one

in all men, and so loved him. He is one in all. But those who have not lived the life of the son of

man did not serve him and did not understand that he is one in all, and so they have not united

with him, and have lost the life in him, and perished.

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Chapter IX end.

MAN LIVES THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT IN THE FLESH

If a man lives for the flesh, he perishes, like all flesh. If he lives in the spirit, he acquires the true

life, but the flesh offends him.

Beware of offences. For it is better that one of thy members should perish than that the whole body be lost. It is better to be deprived of a momentary joy than of the true life. The true life is

given to us, and we all know it, but the deception of the flesh ensnares us.

One day they brought children to Jesus, that they might be with him. But the disciples drove the

children away, saying, What is our teacher to do with the silly children ?

Jesus saw that they had no respect for the children and drove them away, and he was grieved

at the disciples, and said, You have no reason to drive these children away, — they are the best

of people, for they all live in the will of God. They are certainly already in the kingdom of God.

You must not drive them, but learn from them, for, in order that you may live in the will of God,

you must live like children. Children always execute the five rules, which I have given you:

children do not scold, do not harbour evil against men, do not commit adultery, do not swear, do

not resist evil, do not litigate, do not know the difference between their own nation and another,

and do not wage war. Children execute the five rules, and so they are better than grown people

and are in the kingdom of God.

If you will not abandon all the deceptions of the flesh and will not become like children, you will

not be in the kingdom of God.

Only he who understands that the children are better than we, because they do not break the

law of God, comprehends my teaching. Only he who understands my teaching

understands

God.

We cannot despise the children, for they are better than we, and their souls are pure before

God, and are always with God. They are all good. And not one child perishes through the will of

God; they all perish through men, who entice them away from the truth.

And so we must guard them, and not entice them away from the Father and from the life of

truth. And badly acts the man who entices them away from purity. To entice a child away from

what is good, to offend him with anger, adultery, oaths, courts, war, is as bad as hanging a

millstone around his neck and throwing him into the water: he will hardly swim out, but will rather

be drowned. Even so it is hard for a child to get away from an offence into which a man has led

him.

The world is unfortunate only through offences. Offences have always been in the world and

always will be, and a man perishes through offences.

And so give everything away, sacrifice everything, if only you can keep out of offences. When a

fox falls into a trap, he wrenches off his leg and runs away, and lives. Even so must you do: give

everything away, so long as you can get away from an offence. Offences are put

up against all

five rules, and you must guard yourselves against all of them.

Beware then! Here is the offence against the first rule, Be not angry.

Do not ask how many times thou shalt forgive thy brother; do not imagine that thou must forgive

him seven times, and mayest wreak vengeance after that. Forgive, not seven times, but seventy

times seven, and then forgive again.

For the kingdom of God may be likened to this: A king was settling his accounts with the

proprietors. And they brought to him one who owed him a million dollars. And he could not pay

what he owed. And the king would have sold his estate, his wife, his children, and himself; but

the proprietor began to beg the king's mercy, and the king had mercy on him, and forgave him

his whole debt.

This proprietor went home and saw a peasant who owed him fifty cents. The proprietor took

hold of him,

began to choke him, and said, Give me what thou owest me. And the peasant fell down at his

feet, and said, Have patience with me, and I will give thee all But the proprietor did not have

mercy on him, hut put him in prison, to let him stay there until he paid all he owed.

When the peasants saw this, they went to the king, and told him what the proprietor had done.

Then the king called the proprietor, and said to him, Thou dog, I forgave thee the whole rental,

because thou didst beg me, so thou oughtest to have forgiven thy debtor, because I forgave

thee. And the king grew angry and turned the proprietor over to be tormented, till he should pay

what he owed.

Even so God the Father will do with you, if you will not forgive with all your heart those who are

guilty toward you.

When a man offends thee, remember that he is the son of the same God the Father, and a

brother of thine. If he has offended thee, go and admonish him face to face. If he listens to thee,

thou art the gainer, for thou wilt have a new brother.

If he does not listen to thee, admonish him, and call two or three with thee to admonish him. If

he does not listen to them, tell it to the assembly; and if he does not listen to the assembly, then

he will be as a stranger to thee: forgive him, and have nothing to do with him.

Thou knowest that if a quarrel is taken up with a man it is better to make peace with him without

letting it come before the courts. Thou knowest this, and dost so, because thou knowest that if it

comes to litigating, thou wilt lose more. The same is true of any quarrel: if thou knowest that it is

bad and that it will remove thee from God, then get rid of the evil at once and make thy peace,

as long as he has not yet left, with whom the evil was started.

You know yourselves that as it is started on earth, so will it be before God; and if you loose it on

earth, you will be loosed in heaven.

Again you must understand that if two or three have agreed in everything on earth, they will

receive from their Father everything for which they shall ask. For where two or three are united

by my teaching, they execute my

teaching.

Beware 1 Here is the offence against the second rule,

Do not commit adultery.

One day self-styled pastors went up to Jesus and, tempting him, said, May a man leave his wife

?

But he said, Man was created male and female from the beginning, — this is a natural law. And

so a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and man and wife unite into one.

Consequently a man must not break the natural, divine law, and separate what is united. But if

according to your law of Moses it is permitted to send away a wife, this is untrue, for according

to the natural law it is not so. And I tell you that he who sends away his wife drives into debauch

both her and him who takes her up.

And the disciples said to Jesus, If it is necessary to keep the same wife which a man has once

taken to himself, and never to abandon her, that is so difficult to do that it is better not to marry

at all.

He said to them, You may not marry, but you must understand what it means. If a man wants to

live without a wife, he must be pure and not touch a woman. There are such people who have

no use for women ; but if a man loves women, let him bind himself to one woman, and keep her all the time, and have nothing to do with other women.

Beware! Here is the offence against the third rule, Make no promises to any one about anything.

Your self-styled pastors travel about everywhere and cause the people to swear that they will be

true to the

law and the authorities, but they only subvert them in this manner. It is impossible to promise

your body for your soul, for in your soul is God, and men cannot make promises to men for God.

And one day the tax-collectors went up to Peter, and asked him, Well, does your

teacher not

pay his taxes ?

Peter said, No, he does not pay, and he went and told Jesus that he had been stopped and told

that all must pay their taxes.

Then Jesus said to him, A king does not receive tribute from his sons, and they have to pay no

one but the king. Even so it is with us. If we are the children of God, we are under no obligations

to any one but God, and are free before everybody. We are not bound by anything, but if they

ask thee to pay taxes, give them to them, not because thou art obliged to, but because thou

shouldst not resist evil. And if they want to take thy cloak away, give them also thy coat

At another time the pastors came together with the officers of the king, and went to Jesus, trying

to catch him with words.

They said to him, Thou teachest in truth, so tell us whether we are obliged to pay tribute to

Caesar or not.

Jesus saw that they wanted to condemn him for opposing himself to the oath to Caesar. He said

to them, Show me that with which you pay tribute to Caesar.

They showed him a coin. He looked at the coin, and said, What is this ? Whose image and

superscription ?

They said, Caesar's.

And then he said, If so, give to Caesar what is Caesar's, but what is God's, your soul, do not

give to any one but God. Money, property, your labour, everything give to him who will ask you

for it, but do not give your soul to any one but God. And make no promises to any one, for you

are all in the power of God, and your soul give to God alone.

Beware! Here is the offence against the fourth rule,

Do not judge, and be not judged.

One day the disciples of Jesus entered a village and begged permission to stay overnight. They

were not allowed to remain. Then the disciples came to Jesus to complain about it, and they

said, May they, be killed by lightning.

Jesus said, Still you do not understand of what spirit you are. I do not teach how to destroy, but

how to save people.

One day they brought a woman to Jesus, and said, This woman was caught in adultery.

According to the law she ought to be stoned to death. What dost thou say ?

Jesus made no reply, and waited for them to change their minds. But they stuck to him, and

asked how he would judge this woman.

Then he said, He who among you is without error, let him cast the first stone at her. Then the

Pharisees looked at each other, and their conscience smote them, and those who were in front

stepped behind the others, and all went away.

And Jesus was left alone with the woman. He looked up, and saw that no one was there. Well,

he said, Has

no one accused thee ?

She said, No one.

And he said, Neither can I accuse thee. Go, and err no more.

No matter how clear, how bad the case is, there is no one who can accuse a man of it. Only he

who has not erred can accuse, but accusing is already an error.

Once there came a man to Jesus, who said, Order my brother to give me my inheritance.

Jesus said to him, No one has made me a judge over you, and I do not sit in judgment over any

one. Neither can you judge any one.

Beware ! Here is the offence against the fifth rule, There are no different nations; all men are

brothers, children of one God the Father.

A lawyer wanted to offend Jesus, and said, What must I do, in order that I may obtain the true

life ?

Jesus said, Thou knowest what: love God thy Father and thy brother, no matter what his

nationality may be.

And the lawyer said, This would be well, if there were no different nations, for how can I love the

enemy of my nation ?

And Jesus said, There was a Jew who fell into misfortune : he was beaten, robbed, and thrown

out into the road. A Jewish priest passed by, and he looked at the beaten man, and went his

way. Then a Levite passed by, and he looked at him, and went his way. Then a man of a hostile

nation, a Samaritan, passed by. This Samaritan saw the Jew, and he did not consider this, that

the Jews had no regard for the Samaritans, but had pity on the Jew who was beaten. He

washed his wounds and dressed them, and took him on his ass to an inn, and paid the

innkeeper for him, and promised to come later and pay more. Even so treat foreigners, those

who have no regard for you and destroy you, and then you will get the true life.

Jesus said, The world loves its own, but despises the things that are of God, and so the people

of the world, priests and scribes, will torment those who keep the law of God. And I, too, am

going to Jerusalem, and shall be tormented and killed, but my spirit cannot be

killed,— it will

live.

When Peter heard that Jesus would be tormented and killed in Jerusalem, he was grieved. He

took the hand of Jesus, and said to him, If this is so, thou hadst better not go to Jerusalem.

Then Jesus said to Peter, Do not say this. What thou sayest is an offence. H thou art afraid for

me, lest I

should be tortured and killed, that means that thou art thinking of human, and not of divine

things.

He who lives by the light of the comprehension can have no evil befall him, for he is always in

the light; evil can befall only him who comes out of the light of truth into the darkness of the

offence of the flesh.

And calling up the people with his disciples, Jesus said, He who wants to live according to my

teaching must renounce his carnal life; let him be ready for all carnal sufferings, for he who is

afraid for his carnal life will lose his true life, and he who neglects the carnal life will save the

true life.

And again he told them that when they kill a man who lives by the comprehension, the

comprehension does not die, but will live.

And they did not understand it. And the Sadducees came up, and he explained to all what was

meant by the true life in God, and by the rising from the dead. The Sadducees said that after the

carnal death there was no life. They said, How can all rise from the dead ? If they did rise, they

could not all live together. For example, we had seven brothers. The first married and died. His

wife married the second brother, and he died; and she married the third, and so on, until the

seventh. How are the seven brothers going to live with one wife, if they shall all rise from the

dead ?

Jesus said to them, You purposely mix up matters, and do not comprehend what the life after

death is. In this life people marry and are given in marriage; but those who will earn the life after

the carnal death will not marry and be given in marriage, for they do not have to continue life in

others: they themselves do not die, for they unite with God, having become his children.

In your Scripture it says that God said, I am the God of Abraham and Jacob. And this God said

when Abraham and Jacob were already dead for men. Con-

sequently, those who are dead for men are alive for God. If there is a God, and

God does not

die, those who are with God are always alive. The reestablishment from death is the life in God.

The life in God is the fulfilment of the will of God in the carnal life. He who fulfils the will of God

unites with God. For God there is no time, and so, in uniting with God, man passes out of time,

consequently out of death.

When the pastors heard this, they did not know what to invent in order that they might silence

him, and so united with the laymen and began together with them to tempt him.

And one of them, a pastor, said, Teacher, which, in thy opinion, is the chief commandment in

the whole law ?

The pastors thought that Jesus would get caught in the answer according to the law.

But Jesus said, the chief commandment is to love the Lord our God, in whose power we are,

with all our soul, and another follows from it: to love our neighbour, for in him is the same Lord.

In these two commandments is contained everything which is written in all your books.

And Jesus said again, Who, in your opinion, is Christ? Is he anybody's son ?

They said that according to them Christ was the son of David.

Then he said to them, How, then, does David call Christ his master ? Christ is not the son of

David, nor the son of anybody else, except the same Lord our master, whom we know within us,

as our life. Christ is that comprehension which is in us.

After that they asked him no more questions.

And Jesus said, Beware of the leaven of the self-styled pastors. Beware also of the leaven of

the worldly, and of the leaven of the royalty. But, above everything, beware of the leaven of the

self-styled pastors, for that is deception.

When the people understood whereof he spoke, he said, Above all, beware of the teaching of

the learned self-styled pastors. Beware of them, for they have usurped the place of the prophet

who announces the will of God to the people. They have usurped the power to preach the will of

God to the people. They preach words, and do nothing. And it turns out that they say, Do this

and that, but there is nothing to do, for they do not do anything good, and only talk. And they

talk of what cannot be done, but themselves do nothing. All they care to do is to retain the right

of their teachership, and so they try to distinguish themselves: they dress up and want to

receive honours. And so know that no one ought to call himself teacher and pastor. None but

our Lord is a teacher and pastor. But the pastors call themselves teachers, and

thus prevent our

entering the kingdom of God, and themselves do not enter into it.

These pastors think that it is possible to lead to God by external ceremonies, by oaths, and, like

blind people, they do not see that the external things do not mean anything, that everything is in

the soul of man. They do those external things which are easiest, but what is necessary and

difficult, — love, compassion, truth, — they leave out. All they care for is to be externally in the

law, and to lead others externally to the law. And so they are like whited sepulchres, apparently

clean without, but an abomination within. Externally they honour the holy martyrs, but in fact

they are those who torture and kill the saints.

They have always been the enemies of what is good. From them proceeds all the evil in the

world, for they conceal the good, and instead of the good bring forward the bad. Most of all fear

these self-styled pastors. For you know yourselves that any mistake may be corrected; but if

men err in what is good, such a mistake can no longer be corrected. And it is this that the self -

styled pastors do.

And Jesus said, I wanted here, in Jerusalem, to unite all men into one comprehension of the

true good, but the teachers of this city know only how to kill the teachers of good. And so they

remain the same godless people that they were, and do not know God, unless, loving, they

accept the comprehension of God.

And Jesus went away from the temple. Then his disciples said to him, What about this temple of

God with all its adornments, which men have brought as an offering for God ?

And Jesus said, Truly I tell you that this whole temple with all its adornments will be destroyed,

and nothing will be left. There is one temple of God, — the hearts of men, when they love one

another.

And they asked him, When will this temple be ?

And Jesus said to them, It will not be soon. Many people will deceive through my teaching, and

there will be wars and disturbances on account of it. And there will be great lawlessness, and

little love. But when the true teaching shall be disseminated among all men, there will be an end

to evil and to offences.

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Chapter X end.

THE STRUGGLE WITH THE OFFENCES

After this the pastors, the chief priests, sought with all their might to get at Jesus,

so as to

destroy him. They assembled in a council, and began to judge; they said, We must in some way

put a stop to this man; he proves his teaching in such a way that, if we let him alone, all will

believe in him and will abandon our faith. Even now half of the nation is believing in him. And if

people will believe in his teaching, that man, the son of God, is not obliged to obey any one, that

all nations are brothers, that there is nothing special in our Jewish nation which distinguishes us

from the other nations, then the Romans will completely vanquish us, and will destroy all our

laws and our whole faith, and there will no longer be any Jewish kingdom.

And the pastors, chief priests, and learned men took counsel for a long time, and could not

devise what to do with him, for they could not make up their mind to kill him.

Then one of them, Caiaphas, who was the high priest during that year, devised this: he said to

them, We must remember that it is advantageous to kill one man, in order that a whole nation

should not perish. If we let this man alone, the nation will perish, — this I prophesy to you, —

and so it is best to kill Jesus. Even if the people will not perish, they will scatter and will abandon

the one faith, if we do not kill Jesus, and so it is best to kill him.

When Caiaphas said this, all decided that there was nothing to reflect on, and that they ought by

all means to kill Jesus. They would have taken him at once and killed him, but he hid from them

in the wilderness.

But at this time the feast of the passover was at hand,

and many people used to gather in Jerusalem for the feast. And the pastors, the bishops,

counted on this, that Jesus would come to the feast with the people. And so they announced to

the people that if they saw Jesus they should bring him to them.

And, indeed, six days before the passover Jesus said to his disciples, Let us go to Jerusalem;

and he went with them.

And the disciples said to him, Do not go to Jerusalem.

And Jesus said to them, I cannot fear anything, for I am living in the light of the comprehension.

And as any man can walk in daytime, and not at night, that he may not stumble, so any man

may live by the comprehension, that he may not doubt or fear anything. Only he doubts and

fears who lives in the flesh; but for him who lives in the comprehension there is nothing doubtful

or terrible.

And Jesus came into the village of Bethany, near Jerusalem, to Martha and Mary, and the

sisters prepared a supper for him. And as they sat at supper, Martha served them, and Mary

took a pound of costly, precious, perfumed oil, and rubbed Jesus' feet with it, and wiped them

with her hair. And when the odour of the oil spread in the room, Judas Iscariot said, In vain has

Mary wasted this oil. It would have been better if the oil had been sold for three hundred pieces,

and the money given to the poor.

But Jesus said, You will have the poor with you, but me you will soon not have. She did well, for

she has prepared my body for burial.

In the morning Jesus went to Jerusalem. There was a great multitude there for the feast. And

when they saw Jesus they surrounded him, and broke off branches from the trees, and threw

their garments on the road, and cried, Here he is, our true king, who has taught us about the

true God. Jesus sat down on a young ass and rode

on it, and the people ran before him, crying. And thus Jesus rode into Jerusalem. And when he

entered into the city, all the people were agitated, and asked, Who is he? And those who knew

him said, It is Jesus, the prophet out of Nazareth of Galilee.

And Jesus entered the temple, and again drove all the buyers and sellers out of it.

And the pastors, the bishops, saw all this, and said among themselves, See what

this man is

doing. All the people are following after him.

But they did not dare to take him away from the people, for they saw that the people clung to

him, and they devised how they might take him by stratagem.

In the meantime Jesus was in the temple, teaching the people. Among the people there were

not only Jews, but also pagan Greeks. The Greeks had heard of Jesus' teaching and

understood that he was not teaching the truth to the Jews alone, but to all men, and so they wanted also to be his disciples; and they told so Philip, and Philip told Andrew. The disciples

were afraid of bringing Jesus and the Greeks together. They were afraid that the people would

be angered, because he did not recognize any difference between the Jews and the other

nations, and so they could not for a long time make up their mind to tell Jesus so.

When Jesus heard that the Greeks wished to be his disciples, he said, I know that the people

hate me, because I make no difference between Jews and Gentiles and because I recognize

myself to be just like a Gentile; but now the time has come when the teaching of the son of God

has to be recognized among all men. And if I perish for this, I must tell the truth. A grain of

wheat brings fruit only when it perishes. He who is afraid for his carnal life loses

the true life,

and he who despises the carnal life will make this temporal life true, not in time, but in God.

And turning to Andrew and to Philip, he said, He who wants to serve my teaching, let him do the

same as I. And he who does as I do, will be loved by my Father. Now it will be decided whether

my life will be carnal or spiritual. Now, when that toward which I have been walking has come,

shall I say, Father, free me from what I ought to do ? I cannot say this, for I have been walking

toward it. And so I say, Father, manifest thyself in me.

And, turning to the whole people, Jesus said, In the present alone is the power of the spirit over

the flesh; in the present alone is the power of flesh vanquished. And if I lift myself up above the

earthly life, I shall draw all toward me.

And they said to him, According to the law, we have heard, Christ is something especial and

definite, which remains always the same, so how dost thou say that thou, Christ, wilt be lifted up

as the son of man ? What is meant by lifting up the son of man ?

To this Jesus replied, To lift up the son of man means to live by that light of the comprehension

which is within you; to lift up the sou of man above what is of earth means to believe in the light

of the comprehension, while there is this light, in order to be the son of the comprehension. He

who believes in my teaching does not believe me, but the spirit which gave life to the world. He

who understands my teaching, understands the spirit which gave the light to the world. My

teaching is the same light of life which has brought men out of the darkness. And if one hears

my words and does not fulfil them, I do not condemn him, for my teaching does not condemn,

but saves. He who does not receive my words is not condemned by my teaching, but by the

comprehension which is in him. It is this which condemns him. For I did not speak my own

words, but what my Father, the spirit which is within me, has inspired. What I speak is what the

spirit of the comprehension has told me. And what I teach is the true life.

Having said this, Jesus went away, and again concealed

himself from the chief priests.

Among those who heard the words of Jesus there were many powerful and rich men who

believed in his teaching, but were afraid to acknowledge it before the chief priests, for not one

chief priest acknowledged that he believed, for they judged in human, and not in divine fashion.

After Jesus had again concealed himself, the chief priests and the elders again

met in the yard

of Caiaphas and counselled how they might secretly seize Jesus and kill him. They were afraid

to seize him publicly. And there came to counsel with them one of the first twelve disciples of

Jesus, Judas Iscariot, who said, If you wish to seize Jesus secretly, so that the people may not

see him, I shall find a time when there will be but a few with him, and will show you where he is,

and then you can seize him. What will you give me for it ? They promised him thirty dollars. He

agreed to it, and after that tried to find a time to take the chief priests to Jesus, in order that they might seize him.

In the meantime Jesus concealed himself from the people, and only his disciples were with him.

When the first day of the feast of the unleavened bread came around, the disciples said to

Jesus, Where shall we celebrate the passover?

Jesus said to them, Go to some person in the village and tell him that we have no time to

prepare the pass-over, and ask him to allow us to take the passover with him.

And so the disciples did. They asked the permission of a man in the village, and he let them in.

And they came and seated themselves at the table. Jesus knew that Judas Iscariot had already

promised to

betray him to death; but he did not accuse Judas, or avenge himself on him; as he had taught

love to his disciples all his life, so he rebuked Judas in love even now.

When all twelve of them were seated at the table, he looked at them, and said,
Among you sits

he who has betrayed me. Yes, he who drinks and eats with me will cause my destruction.

And so they did not find out of whom he was speaking, and began to eat the supper. As they

were getting ready to eat, Jesus took a loaf, broke it into twelve parts, and gave each disciple a

piece, saying, Take it, and eat it. He who is betraying me, if he eats this piece, will be eating my

body.

Then he filled a cup with wine, and offered it to his disciples, saying, Drink you all out of this

cup.

And when they had all drunk, he said, He who is betraying me has drunk my blood. I will shed

my blood that men may know my testament, — to forgive others their sins. For I shall soon die

and shall no longer be with you in the world, and shall unite with you only in God.

After this Jesus arose from the table, girded himself with a towel, took a pitcher of water, and

began to wash the feet of all the disciples.

When he came up to Peter, Peter said, Art thou really going to wash my feet ?

Jesus said to him, Thou thinkest it strange that I am washing thy feet; but thou wilt soon learn

why I do it. I do it because not all of you are clean, and because among you is my betrayer,

whose feet I want to wash also.

And when Jesus had washed the feet of all of them, he sat down again, and said, Do you

understand why I did it? I did it, that you may do likewise to one another. If I, your teacher, do it,

you certainly must

serve all and not hate any one. If you know this you are blessed. I am not speaking of all of you,

for one of you, whose feet I have washed, and who has eaten bread with me, will betray me.

Having said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and confirmed that one of them would betray him.

And again did the disciples look at each other, but they did not know of whom he was speaking.

One of the disciples was sitting near Jesus, and Simon Peter beckoned to him to ask him who

the traitor was. He asked him.

Jesus said, I will dip a piece, and he to whom I will give it is the traitor. And he gave it to Judas

Iscaiot, saying to him, Whatever thou wilt do, do it at once; and Judas understood that he ought

to go away, and when he took the piece, he went away at once, and it was not possible to run

after him, for it was night.

When Judas was gone, Jesus said, Now it is clear to you what the son of man is; now it is clear

to you that God is in him, that he can forgive his enemies and do good. Children! I have but a

little while to stay with you. Do not philosophize on my teaching, as I have told the pastors, but do what I do. I give you one new commandment: As I have loved you and Judas the traitor, so

you love one another. Only thus shall you be distinguished: be distinguished from other men in

that you love one another.

After this they went to the mount of Olives. On the way Jesus said to them, Now the time comes

when that will happen which is said in the Scripture, that the shepherd will' be killed, and the

sheep will scatter. And thi³ will happen this very night: I shall be taken, and all of you will

abandon me and run away.

And in reply Peter said to him, Even if all are frightened and run away, I will not deny thee. I am

prepared to die with thee.

And Jesus said to him, But I tell thee that this very

night, before cockcrow, when they will take me, thou wilt deny me, not once, but thrice.

But Peter said that he would not, and the disciples said the same.

And then, seeing that the disciples were with him, Jesus was tempted. He felt sorry, because

they wanted to kill him without cause. And he said to his disciples, At first neither you nor I

needed anything. You went without a scrip and without reserve footgear, and I commanded you

to do so; but now, since they regard me as an outlaw, it can no longer be so, and you must

provide yourselves with everything and with knives, lest you be destroyed without cause.

And the disciples said, We have two knives.

And Jesus said, Very well.

And they went beyond the river Cedron, where there was a garden, and entered that garden.

And Jesus said to his disciples, I am weakened, and I must pray. Be with me.

And he seated Peter and the sons of Zebedee near him, and began to groan and feel sorrowful,

because he had fallen into an offence and wanted to struggle against evil.

He said, I am pained and grieved. Help me, rise in spirit together with me.

And he knelt down and prayed.

He said, My Father, spirit, thou art free: strengthen me that the offence of struggle may leave

me; that everything may be as thou wishest, and not as I wish it, and that I may unite with thy

will.

The disciples were not praying and were dispirited, and Jesus rebuked them, and said, Pray; be

strong in spirit, lest you fall into the temptation of timidity or struggle. There is strength in the

soul, but the body is powerless.

And he began to pray a second time, saying, Father, spirit, let everything be as thou wilt.

And again the disciples did not pray with him, but

were dejected And he prayed for a third time in the same way, and then, when he was

strengthened in spirit, he said to his disciples, Now I shall soon be given into the hands of

worldly men.

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Chapter XI end.

THE FAREWELL DISCOURSE

The personal life is a deception of the flesh. The true life is the life which is common to all men.

When Jesus, feeling himself prepared for death, went out, in order to deliver himself, Peter stopped him and asked him whither he was going. Jesus replied, I go whither thou canst not

follow me. I am prepared for death, but thou art not yet prepared for it. Peter said, Nay, I am

even now prepared to give my life for thee. Jesus replied, A man can make no promises. And

he said to all the disciples, I know that death awaits me, but I believe in the life of the Father,

and so am not afraid of it. Let not my death agitate you, but believe in the true God and in the

Father of life, and then my death will not appear terrible to you. If I am united with the Father of

life, I cannot be deprived of life. It is true, I do not tell you what and when and where my life after

death will be, but I point out to you the way to the true life. My teaching does not say what kind

of a life it is going to be, but it reveals the only true way of life. It consists in this, that we should

unite with the Father, for the Father is the principle of life. My teaching is this, that we should live

in the will of the Father and do his will for the life and good of all men. Your teacher after me will

be your recognition of the truth.

By keeping my teaching, you will always feel that you have the truth, that the Father is in you

and you are in the Father. And by recognizing the Father of life in you, you will experience that

peace which nothing will take away from you. And so, if you know the truth and live in it, neither

my death, nor yours can trouble you. Men imagine themselves as separate beings, each with

his own will of life, but that is only a deception. The only true life is the one which recognizes the

will of the Father as the principle of life. My teaching reveals this unity of life and represents life

not as separate shoots, but as one tree, on which all the shoots grow. Only he lives who lives in

the will of the Father, as a shoot on a tree; but he who wants to live by his own will, like a shoot

broken off, dies. If you will live in the will of the Father, you will have everything you wish, for life

is given to man for the good. The Father has given me life for the good, and I have taught you to

live for the good. If you will fulfil my commandments you will be blessed. The commandment

which expresses my whole teaching is only this, that we should love one another. But love

consists in sacrificing our carnal life for another. There is no other definition of love. By keeping

my commandment of love, you will not fulfil it as slaves, who do their master's will without

understanding it, but you will live like free men, even as I, for I have explained to you the

meaning of life which flows from the recognition of the Father of life. You have accepted my

teaching, not because you have chosen it by chance, but because it is the only true one, and

the one with which alone men are free.

The teaching of the world consists in doing evil to men ; but my teaching consists in loving one

another, and so the world hates you, even as it has hated me.

The world does not understand my teaching, and so it will persecute you and cause you harm,

imagining that it thus serves God; so do not marvel at it, and understand that it must be so. The

world, which does not comprehend the true God, must persecute you, and you must affirm the

truth. You will be grieved, because they will kill me; but I shall be killed for establishing the truth.

Thus my death is necessary in order that truth may be established. My death, when I will not

recede from the truth, will confirm you, and you will know wherein the lie is, and wherein the

truth, and what comes from the knowledge of the lie and of the truth.

You will understand that the lie is this, that men believe in the carnal life, and do not believe in

the life of the spirit; that the truth is in the union with the Father; and that this results in the

victory of the spirit over the flesh. When I shall no longer be in the carnal life, my spirit will be

with you. But, like all men, you will not always feel in yourselves the power of the spirit. At times

you will weaken and lose the power of the spirit: you will fall into temptation; at other times you will awaken to the true life. You will be overcome by the enslavement of the flesh, but that will

be only temporary; you will suffer for awhile, and then you will again be regenerated in spirit,

even as a woman who suffers in labour and then feels joy, because she has brought a man into

the world. The same you will feel when, after the enslavement of the flesh, you will rise in spirit:

you will then feel such bliss that there will be nothing for you to wish for.

Know in advance, and know this, in spite of persecutions, and inner struggles, and dejection of

spirit, that the spirit is alive in you, and that the one true God is

the comprehension of the will of the Father, as I have revealed it. And turning to the Father, the

spirit, Jesus said, I have done what thou commandedst me: I revealed to people that thou art

the beginning of everything, and they comprehended me; I taught them this, that they all have

come from the one principle of endless life, and that, therefore, they are one and, as the Father

is in me, and I in the Father, so they are one with me and with the Father. I revealed this to

them, that, as thou, loving them, hast sent them into the world, they also must live in the world

by love.

And Peter said to Jesus, Whither dost thou go ?

Jesus replied, Thou wilt not be able to go whither I am going; but later thou wilt go thither

thyself.

And Peter said, Why dost thou think that I am not able to follow thee; I will give

my life for thee.

And Jesus said, Thou sayest that thou wilt give thy life for me, but thou wilt deny me thrice

before cockcrow.

And Jesus said to his disciples, Let not your spirit be troubled and lose courage, but believe in

the true God of life and in my teaching. The life of the Father is not only the one which is on

earth; there is also another life. If there were only the life which is here, I should have told you

that, when I die, I shall go to the bosom of Abraham and prepare there a place for you, and will

come and take you, and we will be in bliss together in the bosom of Abraham. But I show you

only the way to life.

Thomas said, But we do not know whither thou goest, and so we cannot know the path. We

must know what will be there after death.

Jesus said, I cannot show you what will be there; my teaching is the way, the truth, and life, and

it is impossible to unite with the Father of life, except through my

teaching. If you will fulfil my teaching, you will know the Father.

Philip said, But who is thy Father ?

And Jesus said, The Father is that which gives life. I do the will of the Father, and so thou canst

understand from my life wherein the will of the Father is. I live through the Father, and the

Father lives in me, and everything I do and say, I do by the will of the Father. This is my

teaching, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me. If you do not understand the teaching

itself, you see me and my works, and so you can understand what the Father is. And you know

that he who will follow my teaching can do the same as I do, and even more, for I shall die, and

he will still live. He who will live according to my teaching will have everything he wishes, for

then the son will be the same as the Father.

Whatever you may wish according to my teaching you will have; but you must love my teaching

for that. My teaching will give you an intercessor and comforter in my place. This comforter will

be the recognition of the truth, which the men of the world do not understand, but you will know

it in yourselves. You will never be alone, if the spirit of my teaching is with you. I shall die, and the men of the world shall not see me; but you will see me, because my teaching lives, and you

will live by it. And if my teaching will be in you, you will understand that I am in the Father, and

the Father in me. He who will fulfil my teaching will feel the Father in himself, and my spirit will

live in him.

And Judas, not Iscariot, said to him, But why cannot all live by the spirit of truth ?

And Jesus replied to him, Only him who fulfils my teaching does the Father love, and only in him

can my spirit take up his abode. He who does not fulfil my teaching is not loved by my Father,

because this teach-

ing is not mine, but the Father's. This is all I can tell you now. But my spirit, the spirit of truth,

who will take up his abode in you after me, will reveal everything to you, and you will recall and

understand much of what I have told you.

Thus you may always be calm in spirit, not with that worldly peace which men of the world seek,

but with the peace of the spirit, with which you will no longer have any fear. And so, if you will

fulfil my teaching, you will have no cause for grieving at my death. I will come to you as the spirit

of truth, and together with the recognition of the Father will take up my abode in your heart. If

you fulfil my teaching, you must rejoice, for instead of me the Father will be in your heart, and

that is better for you.

My teaching is the tree of life. The Father is he who tends the tree. He cleans and watches the

branches on which there is any fruit, so that they may bring forth more.

Keep my teaching of life, and life will be in you. And as a shoot does not live of itself, but of the

tree, even so you must live by my teaching. My teaching is the tree, and you are the shoots. He

who lives by my teaching of life brings forth much fruit, and outside of my teaching there is no

life. He who does not live by teaching withers and perishes, and the dry branches are cut off

and burned. If you live by my teaching and fulfil it, you will have everything you wish : for the will

of the Father is that you should live the true life and have what you wish. As the Father has

given me the good, even so I give you the good. Keep this good. I live, because my Father

loves me, and I love the Father, and you must live by the same love. If you live by it, you will be

blessed. My commandment is that you should love one another as I love you. There is no other

love than that we should sacrifice our life for the love of others, even as I have done.

Let us love one another, for love is from God. And he who loves was born of God and knows

God. And he who does not love does not know God, because God is love. God's love for us has

shown itself in this, that he has sent his son, such as he himself is, that we might live through

him.

His love for us is seen in this, that it is not we who have come to love God, but God loves us,

and we must love one another. God can never be seen. If we love one another, God remains in

us, and his love is accomplished in us. We recognize one another only because we remain in

him, and he in us, because he has given us his spirit.

Love is accomplished in us, when we are sure and calm on the day of death, for such as God is,

we are in this world. Love does not know fear; on the contrary, complete love destroys fear, for

fear causes resistance, struggle. And he who fears is not perfect in love.

We love God only because he has loved us first. (Consequently we first know love toward men.)

And so, if one says, I love God, but will not love my brother, he lies, for he who does not love his

brother, whom he sees, cannot love God, whom he has not seen and cannot see. The

commandment is for one who loves God to love his brother.

You are equal to me if you do what I have taught you. I do not regard you as slaves, who are

commanded, but as equals, for I have explained to you everything which I know about the

Father. You do not choose my teaching of your own will, but because I have pointed out to you

this only truth, by which, if you live in it, you will have everything you wish.

The whole teaching is

in this, that we should love one another. If the world shall hate you, you must not wonder, for it

hates my teaching. If you were one with the world, the world would love you; but I have

separated you from the

world, and for this it will hate you. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also.

They will do all this, because they do not know the true God. I have explained to them, but they

would not even listen to me. They have not understood the Father. They have seen my life, and

my life has shown them their error, and for this they have hated me even more. The spirit of

truth, which will come to you, will confirm the same. And you will confirm it. I tell you this in

advance, that you may not be deceived, when they shall persecute you. They will make you

apostates. All will think that killing you they do something pleasing to God. They cannot help

doing it, for they do not understand my teaching, nor the true God. All this I tell you in advance,

that you may not marvel, when all this shall happen.

And so I now go to this spirit who has sent me, and now you understand that you must not ask

whither I go. Before this you were grieved, because I did not tell you whither, to

what place, I go.

But I tell you truly that it is good for you that I am going away. If I do not die, the spirit of truth will not appear to you; and if I die, it will take the abode in you. He will take his abode in you, and it

will be clear to you wherein the truth is, wherein the solution is. The lie is this, that men do not

believe in the life of the spirit. The truth is this, that I am one with the Father. The solution is this,

that the power of the carnal life is destroyed.

I could tell you many things more, but it is hard for you to understand them. But when the spirit

of truth shall take his abode in you, he will show you the whole truth, for he will not tell you

anything new, that which is his, but that which is from God, and he will in all conditions of life

show you the way. He will also be of the Father, as I am of the Father, for he will speak the

same as I speak. But when I, the spirit of truth, shall be in you, you will not always see me. At

times you will hear me, and at other times you will not.

And the disciples said among themselves, What does this mean which he says, At times you

will see me, and at other times you will not see me ? What does this mean: at times you will,

and others you will not ? What does he say ?

Jesus said to them, Do you not understand what is meant by, At times you will

see me, and at

other times you will not see me ? You know how it always is in the world, that some are

sorrowful and lamenting, while others rejoice. You will be sorrowful, and your sorrow will pass

into joy. When a woman bears a child, she is sorrowful in her labour, but when the labour is over

she does not remember her pain for joy, because a man is born into the world.

Even so you will grieve, and suddenly you will see me: the spirit of truth will enter into you, and

your sorrow will be changed into joy. Then you will no longer ask anything of me, for then you

will have everything you wish. Then a man will have from his Father everything he wishes in his

spirit. Before this you asked nothing for the spirit, but then you will ask what you want for the

spirit, and everything will be given you, so that your blessedness will be complete. Now I, a

man, cannot explain all this in words; but when I shall live in you as the spirit of truth, I will clearly announce to you about the Father. Then everything you will ask of the Father in the

name of the spirit will be given you not by me, but by your Father, for he loves you, because you

have received my teaching. You have understood that the comprehension proceeds in the world

from the Father and returns from the world to the Father.

Then the disciples said to Jesus, Now we understand, and we have nothing more to ask. We

believe that thou art from God.

And Jesus said, I told you all this that you may have assurance and rest in my teaching. No

matter what calamities may befall you in the world, fear nothing, for

my teaching has conquered the world.

After this Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, My Father, thou hast given thy son the

freedom of life, that he may know the true life Life is the knowledge of the true God, of the

comprehension discovered by me. I have revealed you to men on earth. I have done the work

which thou commandedst me. I have declared thy essence to men on earth. They were thine

even before this: they have understood that everything they have, that their life, is only from

thee; and that I have taught them not of me, but that I and they have proceeded from thee. I

pray thee for those who recognize thee. They understand that all mine is thine, and thine mine. I

am no longer in the world, but return to thee; but they are in the world, and so I pray thee,

Father, keep thy comprehension in them. I do not ask thee that thou shouldst take them out of

the world, but that thou shouldst deliver them from evil Confirm them in thy

truth. Thy

comprehension is truth.

My Father, I wish that they should be such as I am, that they should understand, even as I do,

that the true life began before the beginning of the world; that they should all be one, as thou, O

Father, art in me, and I in thee, — that they should be one in us; that I in them and thou in me

should unite into one; and that men should understand that they were not bom of themselves,

but that thou, loving, hast sent them into the world, as thou hast sent me

Righteous Father! The world has not known thee, but I have known thee, and they know thee

through me. I have explained to them what thou art. Thou art this,

that love, with which thou lovest me, should be in them. Thou hast given them life, consequently

thou lovest them. I have taught them to know this and to love thee in such a way that thy love

for them should return from them to thee.

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Chapter XII end.

THE VICTORY OF THE SPIRIT OVER THE FLESH

Having said this, Jesus went with his disciples into the garden of Gethsemane. And when he

came into the garden, he said, Let us stay here, I want to pray.

And he went up to Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and was sorrowful and grieved. And he

said to them, My heart is heavy, I shall be sorrowful before my death. Stay here, and he not

dispirited, as I am.

And he went a little distance away, and lay down on the ground on his face, and began to pray,

and said, My Father, spirit, let it not be as I wish it, that I should not die, but do as thou wishest:

let me die, but to thee, as a spirit, everything is possible, and so let me not be afraid of death and have the temptation of the flesh.

Then he got up, and went up to his disciples, and saw that they were dispirited, and said to

them, Can you not for one hour be strong in spirit, so as not to fall into the temptation of the

flesh ? The spirit is strong, but the flesh is weak.

And again Jesus went away from them, and began to pray, and said, Father, if I must die, let me

die, let thy will be done.

And having said this, he again walked over to his disciples, and he saw that they were even

more dispirited than before, and were ready to weep. And he went away from them again, and

said for the third time, Father, thy will be done.

Then he returned to the disciples, and said to them, Sleep awhile and rest yourselves, for now

the son of man will soon be delivered into the hands of the men of the world.
Then wake up, for

he who will betray me is coming already.

And when he had said this, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, suddenly
appeared, and with him

there was a large crowd of people with clubs and knives.

Judas knew that Jesus and his disciples frequently came to this garden, and so he
brought

there the guards and the servants of the chief priests. He said to them, I will
bring you where he

is with the disciples, and that you may be able to recognize him, watch whom I
shall kiss first,

for it is he.

And he went up to Jesus, and said, Hail, teacher, and kissed him.

And Jesus said to him, Didst thou come for this ?

Then the guards surrounded Jesus, and wanted to take him. And Peter took a
knife away from

one of the servants of the chief priests, and cut off his ear.

Jesus said, We must not resist evil; let this be. And he said to Peter, Give the
sword back to him

from whom thou tookest it; he who takes up the sword will perish by the sword.

After this Jesus turned to the whole crowd, and said, Why did you come against
me with

weapons, as against a robber ? Have I not been every day amidst you in the
temple, teaching

you ? Why did you not take me then ? You could do nothing to me in the light of the day, for

your power is only in the darkness.

When his disciples saw that he was taken, they fled. Then the chief commanded the soldiers to

take Jesus and bind him, and to take him first to Annas, who was Caiaphas's father-in-law, for

Caiaphas was the high priest in that year, and was living with his father-in-law. It was the same

Caiaphas who had been planning to destroy Jesus. He considered it useful for the nation to

destroy Jesus, for if he did not destroy Jesus, it would have been worse for the whole nation.

And Jesus was brought into the yard of the house, where the high priest was living.

While they were leading Jesus there, one of the disciples, Peter, walked behind, to see where

they were going to take him. When they took him into the courtyard of the high priest, Peter

went there himself to see how it would all end. And a girl in the yard saw Peter, and said to him,

Art thou also with Jesus of Galilee?

Peter was frightened, lest he should be also accused, and said in a loud voice before all the

people, I do not know what thou sayest

Then, when Jesus was taken into the house, and Peter entered the vestibule with

the people,

and a woman was warming herself at the fire, and Peter went up to her, the

woman looked at him, and said to the people, Behold, this man looks as though he belonged to Jesus of Nazareth.

Peter was frightened even more than before, and swore that he had never been with Jesus, and

did not know what kind of a man Jesus was.

A little while later some men walked over to Peter, and said, It looks, though, as if thou wert one

of these seditious people; we can tell by thy speech that thou art from Galilee.

Then Peter began to curse and swear that he had never seen or known Jesus. And the moment

he had said this, a cock crew. And Peter recalled the words which Jesus had spoken, when

Peter swore that though all might deny him, he would not deny him. Jesus had said, Tonight

thou wilt deny me thrice before cockcrow. And Peter went away from the yard, and wept bitterly.

And the pastors, chief priests, scribes, and rulers assembled at the house of the high priest. And

when all were assembled, they brought Jesus, and the chief priests asked him what his doctrine

consisted in, and who his disciples were.

And Jesus replied, I have always spoken before all, and have never concealed anything from

men. What askest thou me about ? Ask those who have heard and understood my

teaching,

and they will tell thee.

When Jesus said this, one of the chief priests' servants struck Jesus in the face, and said, With

whom art thou speaking ? Is this the way to answer a chief priest ?

Jesus said, If I spoke badly, say so; but if I did not speak badly, why do you beat me ?

The pastors, the chief priests, tried to accuse Jesus, and at first did not find any good cause for

which he might be sentenced. Then they found two false witnesses. These false witnesses said

of Jesus, We ourselves heard this man say, I will destroy this hand-made temple of yours,

and in three days will build you up another temple oi

God, one which is not made by hand.

But even this was not sufficient cause for an accusation. And so the chief priest called out

Jesus, and said, Why dost thou not reply to their testimony ?

Jesus was silent, and said nothing.

Then the chief priest said to him, Tell me, then, art thou the Christ, the son of God?

Jesus answered him, and said, Yes, I am Christ, the son of God. And you will soon see for

yourselves that the son of God is equal to God.

Then the chief priest called out, Thou blasphemest God, and now we need no

further proofs: we

have all heard thee blaspheme God.

And the chief priest turned to the assembly, and said, You have heard yourselves that he

blasphemes God, so what do you sentence him to ?

And all said, We condemn him to death.

And then all the people and the guards pressed forward toward Jesus, and began to spit into his

face, and strike him, and scratch him. They covered his eyes, and boxed his ears, and asked,

Well, prophet, canst thou guess who has struck thee ?

And Jesus was silent.

After they had mocked him, they bound him and took him before Pontius Pilate.

And he was brought to the court. Pilate, the governor, came out to them, and asked, Of what do

you accuse this man ?

They said, This man is doing evil, and so we have brought him before thee.

Pilate said to them, If he does evil, judge him yourselves according to your law.

And they said, We have brought him to thee that thou shouldst put him to death, for we may not kill

And so that which Jesus had wished was fulfilled: he

had said that he must be prepared to die On the cross at the hands of the Romans, and not by

his own death, or at the hands of the Jews.

When Pilate asked him of what they accused him, they said that he was guilty in that he created

sedition among the people, forbidding them to pay taxes to Caesar, and calling himself Christ

and king.

Pilate listened to them, and commanded that Jesus be brought to the court. When Jesus came

in to him, Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews ?

Jesus said, Why dost thou ask ? Dost thou ask in thy own name whether I am the King of the

Jews, or dost thou ask whether what they say of me is true ?

Pilate said, I am not a Jew, and it makes no difference to me what thou callest thyself, but I ask

thee only what thou hast done ? Didst thou call thyself king ?

Jesus replied, I taught the kingdom which is not of earth.

To this Pilate replied, Still thou considerest thyself a king.

Jesus said, Not only I, but even thou canst not help considering me a king. All I teach is to

reveal the truth to you. And every man who lives by the truth will understand me.

Pilate did not wish to listen to Jesus, and said, Thou speakest of truth; what is truth ? and

having said this, he turned around and went again to the chief priests, and said to them, In my

opinion this man has done no wrong.

And the chief priests were persistent, and said that he had done much wrong and was creating

sedition in all of Judea as far as Galilee.

Then Pilate began to question Jesus once more in the presence of the chief priests, but Jesus

made no reply.

Thou seest how they accuse thee, so why dost thou not justify thyself ?

But Jesus kept silence, and did not say another word, so that Pilate marvelled at him.

Pilate happened to think that Galilee was under Herod's jurisdiction, and so he asked, Is he

from Galilee ?

He was told, Yes.

Then he said, If he is from Galilee, he is under Herod's jurisdiction, and I will send him to Herod.

Herod was at that time in Jerusalem, and Pilate sent Jesus to Jerusalem to Herod, that he might

get rid of him. When Jesus was brought to Herod, Herod was very glad to see him. He had

heard a great deal about Jesus, and wanted to know what kind of a man he was. Herod called

him up, and began to question him concerning everything he wanted to know, but Jesus did not

answer him. But the chief priests and teachers accused him fiercely, as before Pilate, saying

that he was a rioter. And Herod regarded Jesus as a worthless man, and, to rail at him, ordered

his servants to put a red robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate.

Herod was satisfied that Pilate had respected him by sending Jesus to his court, and so they

made peace, for they had been at odds before. When Jesus was brought back to Pilate, Pilate

once more called the chief priests and rulers of the Jews, and said to them, You brought this

man to me, saying that he created sedition among the people, and I questioned him in your

presence, and do not see that he is a rioter. I sent him with you to Herod, and you see that

nothing harmful was found there against him, and so it is my opinion that there is no cause for putting him to death, and that it would be better to set him free.

When the chief priests heard this, they cried out, No, put him to death, put him to death in

Roman fashion. Crucify him.

Pilate heard what they said, and replied to the chief priests, Very well; but it is your habit to

pardon a

criminal at your feast. There is a murderer and rioter, Barabbas by name, who is sitting in my

prison. One of the two you must release: whom will you pardon, Jesus or Barabbas ?

Pilate wanted to save Jesus, but the chief priests instructed the people to cry,

Barabbas,

Barabbas!

And so Pilate said, And what will you do with Jesus? And they cried again, In Roman fashion,

on the cross, crucify him!

And Pilate tried to persuade them, saying, Why do you urge me so? He has not done anything

for which he should be put to death, and he has done you no wrong. I will release him, for I see

no guilt in him.

The chief priests and their servants cried, Crucify him, crucify him!

And Pilate said to them, If so, take him and crucify him, for I see no fault in him.

The chief priests replied, We demand that which comes to him for calling himself the son of

God.

When Pilate heard these words, he was troubled, for he did not know what was meant by the

words, Son of God. And he went back to the court, and called Jesus, and asked him, Who art

thou, and whence dost thou come ?

But Jesus made no reply to him.

Then Pilate said, Why dost thou not answer ? Dost thou not see that thou art in my power, and

that I can crucify or release thee ?

Jesus answered him, The evil is that thou hast the power; if thou wert not entrusted with power,

the He-rodians would not have enticed thee and led thee into offence, both thee, and

themselves and the teachers with thee.

Pilate wished to release Jesus, but the Jews said to him, If thou lettest Jesus go, thou wilt prove

that thou art not a faithful servant of Caesar, for he who makes himself a king is Caesar's

enemy.

When Pilate heard these words, he understood that he

could not help but put Jesus to death.

Then Pilate went out to the Jews, took some water, washed his hands before the people, and

said, I am not guilty of the blood of this righteous man.

And the whole people cried out, Let the blood be on us and on our children.

Thus the chief priests prevailed Pilate sat down in his judgment seat, and ordered Jesus to be

flogged. When he was flogged, the soldiers who flogged him put a crown on his head, and gave

him a stick into his hands, and threw a red robe over his shoulders, and began to mock him.

They bowed before him in mockery, and said, Rejoice, King of the Jews; and they struck his

face and head, and spit into his face.

Pilate said to them, How can you have your king crucified ?

But the chief priests cried out, Crucify him; our king is Cassar, — crucify him.

Jesus came out in the crown and the red robe, and said, Behold, here is a man.

Then Pilate ordered that he be crucified.

The red robe was taken off Jesus and his own was put on him, and he was told to carry his own

cross to the place called Golgotha, in order that they might crucify him there. And he carried his

cross and came to Golgotha. And there they stretched Jesus out on the cross, and two men

with him, one at each side of him, and Jesus in the middle.

As they were crucifying Christ, he said, Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are

doing.

And when Jesus was already hanging on the cross, the people surrounded him, and mocked

him.

They came up, and shook their heads, and said, Well, thou wouldst destroy the temple of

Jerusalem and build

it up again in three days, so save thyself and come down from the cross.

And the chief priests and pastors stood there, and mocked him, and said, Thou hast saved

others, but thou canst not save thyself. Show us that thou art Christ, come down from the cross,

and then we will believe thee. He has been saying that he is the son of God, and that God

would not leave him, so why has God left him now ?

And the people and chief priests and soldiers mocked him, and so did one of the robbers who

were crucified with him.

One of the robbers, mocking him, said, If thou art Christ, save thyself and us.

But the other robber heard this, and said, Dost thou not fear God ? Thou art thyself on the

cross, and yet railest at an innocent man. Thou and I are being punished for what we have

done, but this man has done no wrong.

And turning to Jesus, this robber said to him, Sir, remember me in thy kingdom.

And Jesus said to him, Thou art blessed with me at once.

In the ninth hour Jesus, being worn out, cried out in a loud voice, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,

which means, My God, my God, in what hast thou left me ?

And when they heard this among the people, they began to speak and laugh, He is calling Elijah

the prophet; let us see how Elijah will come.

Then Jesus said, I want to drink, and a man took a sponge, dipped it in vinegar, for a vat of it

was standing near by, and raised it up to Jesus on a reed.

Jesus sucked the sponge, and said in a loud voice, It is finished. Father, into thy hands I give up

my spirit.

And inclining his head, he gave up the ghost.

CONCLUSION TO THE INVESTIGATION OF THE GOSPEL

With the words, It is finished, the Gospel is ended. To those who saw the divinity of Jesus in

this, that he was not like other men, the resurrection may have been convincing, that is, may

have proved to them that he was not like other men, and only that he was not like other men,

and nothing else; but only to those who saw Jesus die, and were convinced that he was dead,

and then saw him alive, and were convinced that he was alive. But, according to the description

of the evangelists, except Luke, who suddenly mentions his ascension in the presence of five

hundred men, there were no such people, for according to their description he came as a

dream, as a vision.

Let us even assume that he came in the flesh, and that Thomas put his fingers into his wounds,

what did this prove to Thomas ? That he was not like other men. But what follows from his not

being like other men ? Only this, that other people, such as all are, would find it very hard or impossible to do what a special being did. But if even it were necessary to convince people that

he was not like other men, his appearance to Thomas and ten other men and later

to five

hundred men could not have convinced others, who had not seen this resurrection ; it was only

the disciples who told of the resurrection, but one can tell anything one wishes; to believe the

stories of the disciples, one must have the assurance that these stories are true. And to confirm

the truth of their stories the disciples tell that tongues of fire descended upon them,

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and that they themselves wrought miracles, healed, and raised from the dead. Again, that the

tongues came down and that the disciples raised from the dead and healed, the disciples of the

disciples prove by new miracles, and so until the present relics and saints heal and raise from

the dead; and it turns out that the divinity of Christ is based on the story of unusual events. But

the stories of unusual events are based on stories of other unusual events, and the last unusual

events have not been seen by men in their sound senses.

Very well, Christ was raised from the dead, made his appearance, and flew to heaven: has this

explained anything ? has it added anything to his teaching ? Nothing, absolutely nothing, except

the necessity of inventing new, unnecessary miracles, in order to confirm this

invented,

unnecessary miracle. We have seen and read the teaching about Christ's life previous to the

resurrection, and in the most corrupt parts of this teaching there shines always the light of the

truth which he announced to the world. No matter how crudely the recording evangelists

comprehended the teaching, they rendered the words and actions of the man Jesus, and the

light startles us. Now what is added to the teaching after the resurrection by what Christ did and

said after the resurrection ?

He appears for some reason to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils, and

tells her not to touch him, for he has not yet entered to his Father.

Then he appears to the women, and tells them that he will come to his brothers.

Then he appears to his disciples, and explains something to them of Moses in the whole

Scripture.

And now they see him, and now they do not see him. Then he appears to his disciples, rebukes

them for not believing, shows them his side, and breathes on them, and this causes the sins to

be remitted, to those to whom they remit them. Then he appears to Thomas, and says nothing.

Then he catches fish, a large amount of them, with his disciples, and says three

times to Peter,

Feed my sheep, and predicts Peter's death.

Then he appears to a crowd of five hundred at once, and again he says nothing. Then he says

that to him is given power in heaven and on earth, and that therefore they must bathe people in

the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that he who is bathed will be saved,

and that those to whom they will transmit this spirit will take up snakes and drink poison without

harm, and speak in all languages, which they naturally have never done. Then he flies to

heaven. He said nothing more. What sense was there in his resurrection, since he did and said

only these foolish things ?

And so:

1. The resurrection, like any story about something incomprehensible, cannot prove anything.

2. The resurrection, like any miracle, if a man has seen it, can prove only that something

contrary to the laws of reason has happened, and that a man who has been subject to a miracle

has been subject to something unusual, and nothing else. But if on the basis of a miracle the conclusion is drawn that a man who is not subject to the laws of reason is an unusual man, such

a conclusion is correct only for those who contemplate the miracle, and only as

long as they

contemplate it. A story about a miracle cannot convince any one, so that the truth has to be

confirmed by a miracle which has taken place with the one who tells about it. The confirmation

of the truth of a miracle by another miracle inevitably leads to the fabrication of new miracles, up

to our own time, in order to confirm the truth of the narrator, though in our time we see clearly

that there are no miracles, and that, as miracles are invented for the present time, they must

have been invented for the past. The story about the miracle of Christ's resurrection betrays its

untruth in that

it sharply differs in its primitiveness, insignificance, and, simply, stupidity from all previous

descriptions of Christ's life, and shows clearly that the story of Christ's real life had for its

foundation actual life, full of depth and holiness ; but the story of the resurrection and the

supposed actions and speeches after it no longer had life for its basis, and is altogether a

fabrication. No matter how crude and primitive the description of Christ's life is, the holiness of

his life and the elevation of his personality shines through the crudeness and primitiveness of

the writers; but when there is no longer anything real at the basis of the description, but only

mere inventions, this primitiveness and crudeness appear in all their nakedness. They have

evidently managed to raise him from the dead, but they cannot make him say or do anything

worthy of him.

3. The miracle of the resurrection is directly opposed to the teaching of Christ, consequently it

was hard to make Christ say anything characteristic of him after the resurrection, since the very

idea that he could rise from the dead is contrary to the whole meaning of his teaching. We must

fail to comprehend his whole teaching, in order that we may conceive of the possibility of his

resurrection in the body. He even directly denied the resurrection, explaining how we were to

understand the resurrection of which the Jews spoke.

How the dead are raised, he said, Moses showed in the bush, when he called God the God of

Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not a God of the dead, but of the

living; for to God all are living. He said, The spirit brings to life, and the flesh is of little avail He

said, I am the living bread, which has come down from heaven. He said, I am the way, the truth,

and the life He said, I am the resurrection and the life. And him who taught that he was that

which was sent from God into the world, to give

life to men; that which gave life; that which is the spirit; that which does not die; that which will

return to men as the spirit of truth, — him they understood to say that he was to rise from the

dead in the flesh. Indeed, what could that Jesus do, who was glad to return to the Father, that

Jesus who, dying, said, Into thy hands I give up my spirit ? What could he do and say, when he

was imagined to have risen from the dead in the flesh, except what was contrary to his teaching

? And so it was.

This legend of the resurrection, which is expressed in the last chapters of the gospels, which did

not have Christ's life and words for its basis, and which wholly belongs to the views held by the

recorders of the gospels on the life and teaching of Jesus, is remarkable and instructive in that

these chapters clearly show the depth of the layer of misunderstanding, with which the whole

description of Jesus' life and teaching is covered. It is as though a precious painting were

covered with a thick layer of paint, and those spots, where the paint got on the bare wall,

showed clearly the depth of the layer which covered the picture itself. The story of the

resurrection gives the key for the comprehension and explanation of all miracles, of which the

Gospel is full, and of those contradictory words and conceptions by which the meaning of the

best passages of the teaching is frequently destroyed.

It is not known who wrote the fourth gospel, and the history of criticism has come to the

conclusion that we shall never find that out. There may be more or less probable suppositions

as to time, place, persons; suppositions as to what gospel, or what part of what gospel, is

copied from another, but their origin is unknown. We cannot judge of the historical

trustworthiness of the Gospel, but we are able to judge of the quality of the books themselves.

We can judge as to what formed the foun-

dation of the Christian beliefs of men, and what did not have any influence on the beliefs.

From this side we see in the gospels two sharply distinguished parts of the expositions: one the

exposition of the teaching; the other, an attempt at proving the truth of the teaching, or, more

correctly, the importance of the teaching, such as are the miracles, prophecies, and predictions.

The teaching has passed the centuries unimpaired, — all agree on this. The proofs, which, no

doubt, were proofs, now form the chief stumbling-block in the acceptance of the teaching.

To this part belong all the miracles and the chief miracle, the resurrection. In the description of

the resurrection, as in an event fabricated without any foundation, it is easiest of all to follow out

the methods of the formation of such legends, and the causes of their acceptance, and the

methods of their exposition, and their significance, and their consequences. The origin of the

legend of the resurrection was a confirmation of the veracity of the writers (except Luke), and it

is written down in the gospels so clearly that every unbiassed man cannot help but see the most

natural germ of the legend, such as around us spring up every day in the stories of miraculous

relics, saints, magicians. The stories and articles of spiritualism, of the girl who materialized and

danced, are told more definitely and more circumstantially than the story of the resurrection.

Nothing could be clearer than the history of the growth of this legend. On the Sabbath they went

to see the grave. The body was not there. Evangelist John tells that they said that the disciples

had taken out the body. Women come to the grave, one of them Mary

Magdalene, out of whom

seven devils have been cast, and she is the first to say that she saw something at the grave,

something like a gardener, or an angel, or him himself. The story passes from gossips to

gossips, and then to the dis-ciples. Eighty years later they tell that such and such a man saw

him there and then, but all the accounts are contradictory and indefinite. The disciples do not

invent them, — so much is evident, — but none of- the men who revere his memory dare

contradict what, in their opinion, tends to add to his glory, and, above all, to convince others that

he is from God, and that God produced a miracle in his honour. It seems to them that this is the

best proof, and the legend grows and spreads.

The legend aids in the dissemination of the teaching, but the legend is a lie, while the teaching

is truth. And so the teaching is no longer transmitted in all the purity of the truth, but intermingled

with the lie. One lie provokes another for its confirmation. New false legends of miracles are told

in confirmation of the first false legend. There appear legends of miracles wrought by the

followers of Christ and of miracles which preceded him, — of his procreation, his birth, his whole

life,— and the whole teaching is mixed with lies. The whole exposition of his life and teaching is

covered up by a thick layer of paint of the miraculous, which dims the teaching. New believers

join Christ's faith, not so much in consequence of his teaching, as of the faith in the

miraculousness of his life and actions. And there comes that terrible time, when there appears the conception of faith, not of iof which Christ speaks (the inward inevitableness of conviction,

which becomes the basis of life), but as a consequence of an effort of will, when one can say, I

command you to believe, I want to believe, you must believe. There comes the time, when all

the false legends take the place of the teaching, all are gathered into one, are formulated, and

are expressed as dogma, that is, as decrees. The crowd, the rude crowd, takes possession of

the teaching, and, smearing it over with the false legends, obscures it.

But, in spite of all the efforts of the crowd, the chosen people see the truth through all the mire

of lies and carry it in all its purity through the ages, by the side of the lies, and in this form the

teaching reaches us. He who in our day, be he Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Milker, Stundist,

Khlyst, Eunuch, Rationalist, or of any other creed, reads the Gospel, finds himself in a strange

position. He who does not purposely shut his eyes cannot help but see that, if

there is not

everything in it which we know and live by, there is at least something very wise and significant.

But this wisdom and significance is expressed in such a monstrously bad way, as Goethe says,

that one cannot find a worse written book than the Gospel, and is buried in such a lumber of

monstrous, stupid, even unpoetical legends that one does not know what to do with this book.

There is no other interpretation in this book than what the different churches give to it. These

interpretations are all filled with absurdities and contradictions, so that in the beginning one is

confronted with an alternative: either, as the Russian proverb has it, to get furious at the lice and

chuck the fur coat into the stove, that is, to reject the whole as absurd, as ninety-nine of every

hundred men actually do, or to subvert reason, as the church commands us to do, and accept

everything stupid and unimportant with what is wise and important, which is actually done by the

remaining hundredth of men, who either have no vision, or know how to squint in such a way

that they do not see what they do not wish to see. But this alternative is not firmly grounded. It is

enough to show these people what they did not wish to see, and they involuntarily reject with

the lie the truth which was mixed in with it. What is terrible in this case is this, that the lie, which

is smeared in with the truth, is not smeared in by the enemies of truth, but by its first friends: that

this lie was considered of importance and served as the first instrument for the dissemination

and propagation of truth is proved by this, that the lie about Christ's resurrection was, during the

times of the apostles and the martyrs of the first centuries, the chief proof of the truth of Christ's

teaching. It is true, this same fable of the resurrection was also the chief cause of unbelief in the

teaching. The pagans in all the lives of the first Christian martyrs call them men who believe in

this, that their crucified one rose from the dead, and quite legitimately rail at them for this.

But the Christians did not see this, just as the popes in Kiev do not see that their straw-stuffed

relics are on the one hand an incitement to faith, and on the other an obstacle to it Then, during

the first times of Christianity, it cannot be denied that they were necessary; I am even willing to

admit that they cooperated in the dissemination and confirmation of faith. I can imagine how,

thanks to faith in the miracle, men came to see the importance of the teaching and turned to it.

The miracle was not a proof of the truth, but of the importance of the matter. The

miracle

attracted attention, — the miracle was an advertisement. Everything which happened was

foretold; a voice speaks from heaven, the sick are healed, the dead rise, — how, then, can one

help directing his attention to the teaching, and trying to grasp it ? Its truth enters the soul, but

the miracles are only an advertisement. Thus the lie was useful. But it could be useful only in

the first time, and only because it attracted men to the truth. If there had been no lie, the

teaching might have been disseminated more quickly still. But there is no need of considering what might have happened. The life of that time concerning the miracles may be compared with

this, as if a man sowed a forest, and in the sowing put up a sign saying that God sowed this

forest, and that he who does not believe that there is a forest here will be eaten up by monsters.

Men are to believe it, and must beware of tramping down the forest. This might have been

useful and necessary in its time, when there was not any forest there, but when the forest grows

up, it is evident that that which was useful became unnecessary and harmful, as a lie. The same

is true of the belief in miracles, which is connected with the teaching: the belief in them aided in

the propagation of the faith, — they may have been useful; but the teaching has

been

disseminated and confirmed, and the belief in miracles has become useless and harmful. So

long as they believed in miracles and in the lie, it happened that the teaching itself took such

firm root that its stability and dissemination became an essential proof of its truth. The teaching

has passed unimpaired through the ages, — all agree to this, — and the external, miraculous

proofs of its truths now form the chief stumbling-block in accepting the teaching. To us now the

proofs of the truth and importance of Christ's teaching are only an obstacle which prevents our

seeing the significance of Christ.

Its existence of eighteen hundred years among billions of people sufficiently attests its

importance. Maybe it was necessary to say that the forest was planted by God and that a

monster guarded it and God defended it; maybe it was necessary to say so as long as there

was no forest; but now I live in this forest of eighteen hundred years of existence, when it has all

grown up and surrounds me on all sides. I need no proofs that it exists: it does exist. So let us

leave out what was necessary at some past period, in order to make the forest grow, — to form

the teaching of Christ.

Many things were necessary, but the question is not the investigation of how the teaching was

formed; the question is as to the significance of the teaching. It is the business of history to

investigate how the teaching was formed; but for the comprehension of the meaning of the

teaching we do not need any reflections on the methods used for the confirmation of the truth of

the teaching. These two parts are sharply separated in all the gospels;

As I have said, the four gospels are like a wonderful painting which for temporary purposes is all

covered up with a deep layer of paint. This paint is continued to both sides of the painting: the

layer over the bare wall, — previous to the birth of Christ, — all the legends about John the

Baptist, about the procreation, and about the birth; then follows the layer over the painting, —

miracles, prophecies, and predictions; and then the layer over the bare wall again, — the

legends of the resurrection and the acts of the apostles, etc. Knowing the thickness of the layer

and its composition, we must scratch it off where it runs over the bare wall and is particularly

evident in the legend of the resurrection, and carefully scrape it off from the whole painting, and

then only shall we understand the painting in all its significance, and it is this that I have been

trying to do.

My idea is as follows: The Gospel consists of two distinct parts so far as purposes are

concerned. One is the exposition of Christ's teaching; the other is the proof of the importance

and divinity of this teaching. All the churches agree on this. The proofs of the importance and

divinity of Christ's teaching are based on the consciousness of the truth of Christ's teaching (on

which all the churches also agree) and on external historical proofs of the significance,

importance, and divinity of the teaching, such as were collected in the gospels in the first time of

the teaching and such as, by their essence, could have been convincing only to the eye-

witnesses, but in our time attain the opposite result, by repelling from the comprehension of and

belief in the teaching of the church, not the enemies of Christ, but the men who are sincerely

devoted to the teaching. Nor can the churches help admitting that the aim of these proofs of the

importance is the conviction of the truth of the teaching, and if there presents itself another, not

an internal, but an external, historical proof of the importance of the teaching, which

is complete, incontrovertible, and clear, then we must reject those proofs which call forth

incredulity and which serve as an obstacle in the propagation of the teaching, and hold on to the

incontrovertible and clear external proof of the importance. Such a proof, which did not exist in

the first times, is the dissemination of the teaching itself, which penetrates all human knowledge,

serves as a foundation of human life, and is constantly expanding. Thus, in order that we may

understand the teaching, we not only can, but must inevitably put aside from the teaching all

those proofs of its truth, which give way to other indubitable proofs, and which give nothing for

the comprehension of the teaching and serve as a chief obstacle to its acceptance. Even if

these proofs were not harmful, they are no longer necessary, since they have an entirely

different purpose and can add nothing to the teaching.

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SHORT EXPOSITION OF THE

GOSPEL

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1882

(The Short Exposition of the Gospel is an abbreviation of the preceding work, from which it

differs but slightly in wording, hence all that is given here is the Preface and the Conclusion,

which are not in the larger work, and a synopsis of the Gospel verses which are quoted in this

Short Exposition. —Translator's Note.)

SHORT EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL

PREFACE

This Short Exposition of the Gospel is an extract from a large work which is lying in manuscript

and cannot be printed in Russia.

This work consists of four parts :

1. An exposition of that course of my private life and of my thoughts which have led me to the

conviction that the truth is to be found in the Christian teaching.

2. An exposition of the Christian teaching according to the interpretations of the church in

general, — the apostles, the councils, and the so-called fathers of the church, and proofs of the

falseness of these interpretations.

3. An investigation of the Christian teaching, not according to these interpretations, hut

according to what has reached us from the teaching of Christ, as ascribed to him and recorded

in the gospels, and a translation and harmonization of the gospels.

4. An exposition of the real meaning of the Christian teaching, of the causes why it was

distorted, and of the consequences which its preaching was to have.

This Short Exposition of the Gospel is an abbreviation

of the third part The harmonization of the four gospels is made in accordance with the meaning of the teaching. In this harmonization I had hardly to depart from the order in which the gospels

are expounded, so that in my harmonization there are rather fewer transpositions of the verses

of the Gospel than in the majority of concordances known to me, and fewer than in the

harmonization of the four gospels by Grechul[^]vich.

In the Gospel of John there are no transpositions in my harmonization: it is expounded in the

same order as in the original.

The division of the Gospel into twelve chapters, or six (if each two be united), resulted naturally

from the meaning of the teaching.

Here is the meaning of these words:

1. Man is the son of the infinite principle, the son of this Father, not in the flesh, but in the

spirit.

2. Therefore man must serve this principle in the spirit.

3. The life of all men has a divine beginning. It alone is holy.

4. Therefore man must serve this principle in the life of all men. Such is the will of the Father.

5. Only the ministering to the will of the Father of life gives the true, that is, the rational, life.

6. Therefore the gratification of one's wil is not necessary for the true life.

7. The temporal, carnal life is a food for the true life, — a material for the rational life.

8. Therefore the true life is outside of time, — it is only in the present.

9. The deception of the life of time, of the life of the past and of the future, conceals from men

the true life, — of the present.

10. Therefore man must strive to destroy the deception of the temporal life of the past and of

the future.

11. The true life is not only outside of time, — a life of the present, but it is also outside of

personality, — it is the common life of men.

12. Therefore he who lives in the present the common life of all men unites with the Father,

the beginning and foundation of life.

Each two chapters have between them the connection of cause and effect. In addition to the

twelve chapters there are added to the exposition : the introduction from the first chapter of

John, in which the writer speaks in his own name about the meaning of the whole teaching, and

a conclusion from the epistle of the same writer (written, no doubt, before the gospels), which

contains a general deduction from everything which precedes. The introduction and conclusion

do not form any essential part of the teaching. They are only general views of the

whole

teaching. Although the introduction and the conclusion may be omitted without any loss to the

meaning of the teaching (the more so since these two parts were written in the name of John,

and not of Jesus), I have retained them, because in a simple and rational understanding of

Christ's teaching these parts, confirming one another and the whole teaching, in

contradistinction to the queer interpretations of the church, furnish the simplest indication of the

meaning which ought to be ascribed to the teaching.

In the beginning of each chapter I have placed, besides a short definition of the contents, the

words of the prayer, which Jesus taught his disciples to recite, and which befit the particular

chapters.

When I finished my work, I discovered to my surprise and joy that the so-called Lord's prayer is

nothing but a briefly expressed exposition of the teaching of Jesus in the very order in which the

chapters were arranged by me, and that each expression of the prayer corresponded to the

meaning and order of the words.

1. Our Father Man is the son of God.

2. Which art in heaven,

God is the infinite spiritual principle of life.

8. Hallowed be thy name.

Let this principle of life be
holy.

4. Thy kingdom come.

May his power be realized in
all men.

5. Thy will be done, as in heaven,

May the will of this infinite principle be done in himself,

0. So in earth. So also in the flesh.

7. Give us our daily bread

The temporal life is the food for the true life.

8. To-day.

The true life is in the present.

9. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And let not our transgressions and
errors conceal the true life
from us.

10. And lead us not into temptation, Let them not lead us into
deception,

11. But deliver us from evil: And so there will be no evil.

12. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory. And let there be thy dominion, and

power, and reason.

In the extensive exposition of the third part, which is in manuscript, the Gospel, according to the

four evangelists, is translated and explained in full, without the least omissions; but in the

present exposition the following verses are left out: The procreation and birth of John the

Baptist, his imprisonment and death, the birth of Jesus, his genealogy, his flight with his mother

to Egypt, the miracles of Jesus in Cana and Capernaum, the casting out of the devils, the

walking on the waters, the drying up of the fig-tree, the healing of the sick, the resurrection of

Christ himself, and the indications of the prophecies which took place in Christ's life.

These verses are omitted in the present short exposition because, not containing any teaching,

but only describing events which took place before, during, and after the preaching of Jesus,

they add nothing, and complicate and surcharge the exposition. No matter how these verses

may be understood, they contain neither contradictions to the teaching, nor confirmations of it.

The only significance of these verses for Christianity was this, that they proved the divinity of

Christ to him who did not believe in it. But for a man who does not see the convincingness of the

story of the miracles, and who besides does not doubt the divinity of Jesus, according to his

teaching, these verses fall off, of their own accord, as being unnecessary. In the large

exposition every deviation from the usual translation, every added explanation, every omission

is explained and proved by the collation of the different variants of the gospels, by contexts, and

by philological and other considerations. In this Short Exposition all such proofs, and the

rejections of the false comprehension of the church, as also the detailed notes with the

quotations, are omitted on the ground that the reflections on each separate passage, which at

times are very long, are not the chief proofs of the true understanding of the teaching. The main

proof of the truth of the understanding is the unity, clearness, simplicity, fulness of the teaching

and its correspondence with the ' inner feeling of every man who is seeking the truth.

In respect to all the departures in my exposition from the text as accepted by the churches, the reader must not forget that the customary conception that all four gospels, with all their verses

and letters, are sacred books, is, on the one hand, a very gross error, and on the other, a very

gross deception.

The reader must remember that Jesus never wrote any book himself, as did Plato, Philo, or

Marcus Aurelius; nor did he ever, like Socrates, transmit his teaching to educated people; he

spoke to those uneducated men whom he met in life, and only much later, long after his death,

did people come to realize that what he had said was very important, and that it would not be

bad if they jotted down a few of the things which he said and did,

and it was nearly a hundred years later that they began

to write down what they had heard about him.

The reader must remember that there was a large, a very large number of such notes; that

many have disappeared ; that many were very bad, and that the Christians made use of all of

them, and by degrees picked out what to them seemed to be better and more sensible; that, in

selecting these best gospels, out of the enormous literature about Christ, the churches,

according to the proverb which says, “ You can’t cut a stick without knots,” could not help but

take in some knots also; that there are many places in the canonical gospels which are as bad

as in the rejected apocrypha, and that in the apocryphal literature there is some good.

The reader must remember that what can be sacred is Christ's teaching, but by no means a

certain number of verses and letters, and that certain books cannot become sacred from the

first to the last line for the very reason that men say that they are sacred. Only our Russian

readers of the educated class can, thanks to the censorship, ignore the labours of the historical

criticism of the last hundred years, and say naively that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and

Luke, as they are, were written by the evangelists, each separately and in full.

The reader must remember that to say this in the year 1880, ignoring everything which science

has worked out in this matter, is the same as when in the past century they spoke of the sun as

turning around the earth.

The reader must remember that the synoptical gospels, as they have reached us, are the fruit of

slow accretion by means of copying and interpolation, and reflections of thousands of different

minds and hands, and by no means the productions of the Holy Ghost who spoke to the

evangelists.

The reader must remember that the ascribing of the gospels in their present form to the apostles

is a fable,

which not only cannot stand any criticism, but has even no foundation but the desire of pious

people, who want it to be so. The gospels were selected, complemented, and expounded

through the ages. All the gospels of the fourth century that have reached us are written in a

continuous script, without signs of punctuation, and so were after the fourth and fifth centuries

subject to most varied readings; that they count as many as fifty thousand such different

evangelical books.

All this the reader must remember, in order that we may not be driven to that customary view

that the gospels, as they are now understood, have come to us in that form from the Holy

Ghost.

The reader must remember that there is nothing prejudicial in rejecting from the gospels the useless passages and in illuminating some of them by others, that, on the contrary, it is

prejudicial and godless not to do so, but to consider a given number of verses and letters holy.

On the other hand, I beg the reader of my exposition of the Gospel to remember that, if I do not

look upon the gospels as upon sacred books, I at the same time do not look upon them as upon

mere documents of the history of religious literature. I understand both the theological and the

historical view of the gospels, but I look differently at them, and so I beg the reader, in reading

my exposition, not to be switched off on the church view, nor on the historical view of the

gospels, which of late has become the fashion with cultivated people, a view which I did not hold

and which I find equally incomplete.

I look on Christianity not as on an exclusive divine revelation, nor as on a historical

phenomenon, but as on a teaching which gives us the meaning of life. I was led to Christianity,

not by theological or historical investigations, but by this, that when, being fifty years old, I asked

myself and the wiseacres of my surroundings what

I am, and wherein lies the meaning of my life, and received the answer, “Thou art an accidental

concatenation of particles, — there is no meaning in life, and life itself is evil,” — I was brought

to the point of despair and wanted to commit suicide; but, recalling that formerly, in my

childhood, when I believed, there had been for me a meaning in life, and that the believing men

around me, the majority of men, who are not corrupted by wealth, believed and lived an actual

life, I doubted the correctness of the answer given me by the wisdom of men of my class, and I

tried to understand the answer which Christianity gave to those who live a real life.

But, while I studied Christianity, I found, together with this source of the pure water of life, mud

and ooze, which is illegitimately connected with it, and which alone concealed its purity from me;

by the side of the profound Christian teaching I found connected with it the foreign, monstrous

teaching of the Jews and of the church. I was in the position of a man who has received a bag

of stinking mud, and who only after prolonged struggle and labour discovers that in this dirty bag

there lie costly pearls; he understands that he is not to blame for his aversion to the stinking

mud, and that the men who have collected and preserved these pearls together with the mud

are not to blame, but deserve love and respect, and yet he does not know what to do with the

pearls which he has found mixed with the mud. I was in an agonized state, until I discovered

that the pearls were not grown over with the mud, but could be cleared of it.

I did not know the light, and thought that there was no truth in life, but, having convinced myself

that men live by that light alone, I began to look for its source, and found it in the gospels, in

spite of the false interpretations of the churches. And when I reached this source, I was blinded

by the light, and received full answers to my questions as to the meaning of my life and of the

life

of other men, answers which fully agreed with those I knew of the other nations, and which, in

my opinion, surpassed them all.

I was looking for an answer to the question of life, and not to the theological and historical

questions, and so it did not make any difference to me whether Jesus Christ was a God, or not,

or from whom the Holy Ghost descended, and so forth; and equally unimportant and

unnecessary it was for me to know when and by whom the gospel or this or that parable was

written, and whether it may be ascribed to Christ, or not. What was important to me was the

light, which for eighteen hundred years has been illuminating humanity, and which has

illuminated me; but what I should call this source of light, and what its materials are, and by whom it was lighted, were a matter of indifference to me.

And I began to look closely at this light and to discover everything that was opposed to it, and

the farther I proceeded on this path, the more indubitable did the difference between truth and

untruth become to me. In the beginning of my labour I had doubts and attempts at artificial

explanations, but the farther I proceeded, the clearer and more undoubted did the matter

become to me, and the more unquestionable the truth. I was in the position of a man who is

picking up a statue that is broken in pieces. In the beginning there can be some doubt whether

this or that piece is a part of the leg or the arm, but when the legs are put together, and the

piece certainly does not belong to the leg, and when, besides, it fits in with another side piece

and with its curves coincides with a lower part, there can be no doubt as to where it belongs.

This I felt in proportion as my work proceeded, and if I am not insane, the same feeling will

overcome the reader of the longer exposition of the Gospel, where each proposition is at the

same time confirmed by philological considerations, and by variants,

and by contexts, and by agreement with the fundamental idea.

The preface would have ended here, if the gospels were books that were revealed at the

present time, if Christ's teaching had not been subject to the false interpretations of eighteen

hundred years. But now, that we may understand the true teaching of Christ, as he himself must

have comprehended it, it is necessary to recognize the chief causes of the false interpretations,

which have distorted the teaching, and the chief methods employed by the false interpretations.

The chief cause of those false interpretations, which have so distorted Christ's teaching that it is

difficult to see under their thick crust, consists in this, that Paul, who did not properly understand

Christ's teaching and did not know it as it was later expressed in the Gospel of Matthew,

connected it with the teaching of the Pharisaic tradition and so with all the teachings of the Old

Testament. Paul is generally regarded as an apostle of the Gentiles, as a protestant apostle.

Such he was indeed externally in respect to the circumcision, and so forth. But the doctrine of

the tradition, of the connection of the Old Testament with the New, was introduced into

Christianity by Paul, and this doctrine of the tradition, this principle of the tradition, was the chief

cause of the distortion of the Christian teaching and of its misunderstanding.

From the time of Paul begins the Christian Talmud, which is called the doctrine of the church,

and Christ's teaching becomes, not the one, divine, and full teaching, but one of the links of the

chain of revelation, which begins with the beginning of the world and which lasts in the church

up to the present time.

These false interpreters call Jesus a God; but the fact that they recognize him as a God does

not cause them to ascribe a greater significance to the words and teachings, which are ascribed

to God, than to the Pentateuch, the

Psalms, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, the Revelation, and even the (Ecumenical

Decrees and the writings of the Holy Fathers of the church.

These false interpreters do not admit any other understanding of the teaching of Jesus Christ

than such as are in agreement with the preceding and the subsequent revelation, so that it is

not their aim to explain the significance of Christ's preaching, but only to find the least

contradictory meaning in the most diversified writings, the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Gospels,

the Acts, the Epistles, and everything which is regarded as Holy Scripture.

It is evident that? with such a view of Christ's teaching the understanding of it is unthinkable.

From this same false view results an endless diversity in the understanding of the Gospel

Naturally there can be an endless number of such explanations, which have for their aim, not

the truth, but the harmonization of what cannot be harmonized, that is, of the writings of the Old

and the New Testaments, and there is a large number of them. And so, all that is

necessary in

order to acknowledge a certain harmonization as true, is to have recourse to external means, to

miracles, to the descent of the Holy Ghost, and such like.

Different men have harmonized in their own way; but each in his harmonization affirms that his

harmonization is the continued revelation of the Holy Ghost. Such are the epistles of Paul, the

decrees of the councils, which begin with the phrase, "It pleased us and the Holy Ghost;" such

are the decrees of the Popes, the synods, the Arians, the Paulicians, and all the false

interpreters, who affirm that the Holy Ghost speaks through their mouths. All of them use the

same crude method of confirming the truth of their harmonization by saying that their

harmonization is not the fruit of their thoughts but a confirmation by the Holy Ghost.

Without entering into the analysis of the creeds themselves, each of which calls itself the true

one, we cannot help but see that in their common method of recognizing the enormous quantity

of the so-called Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments as equally sacred lies the

insurmountable, self-set obstacle to the comprehension of Christ's teaching, and, also, that from

this error results the possibility, and even the necessity, of endlessly diversified hostile sects.

Only the harmonization of an immense number of revelations can be endlessly diversified; but

the interpretation of one person, considered as God, cannot lead to the evolution of sects. The

teaching of God descended upon earth cannot be understood differently. If God descended

upon earth to reveal the truth to men, then the least which he could do was to reveal it in such a

way that all might understand it; and if he did not do so, he was not God; but if the divine truths

are such that even God could not make them comprehensible to men, men certainly will not be

able to do so.

If Jesus is not God, but a great man, his teaching can to a still lesser degree be the cause of

sects. The teaching of a great man is great even because it is comprehensible and clearly

enunciates what others have not enunciated clearly and intelligibly. What is not comprehensible

in the teaching of a great man is not great, and so the teaching of a great man cannot bring forth

sects. The teaching of a great man is great in that it unites all in the one truth.

Only the interpretation which affirms that it is the revelation of the Holy Ghost, that it is the only,

true revelation, and that all the rest are false, produces hatred and the so-called sects. Let the

sectarians of all the creeds say as much as they please that they do not condemn another

creed, that they are praying for their union with the others, and that they do not hate them,

they are not telling the truth. Never has any assertion of any dogma, beginning with Arius,

resulted from anything but an accusation of falsehood against a contrary dogma. But the

proclamation that the expression of a given dogma is divine, of the Holy Spirit, is the highest

degree of pride and stupidity: of the highest pride, for nothing more haughty can be said than

that the words which I utter God himself spoke through me, and of the highest stupidity,

because nothing more stupid can be said than to reply to the assertion of a man that God is

speaking through his mouth, “ No, God is not speaking through your mouth, but through mine,

and he says the very opposite of what your God has said.” And yet it is precisely this that all the

councils, all the symbols of faith, all the churches say, and from this has resulted all the evil

which has been committed in the world in the name of religion. But, besides this external evil of the sects, there is also another important, internal defect, which is inherent in all the sects, and

which invests them with an indistinct, indefinite, and unscrupulous character.

This defect consists in this, that, having recognized as the last revelation the Holy Ghost, who

came down on the apostles and has passed over a specially chosen people, the false

interpreters nowhere show directly, definitely, and conclusively wherein this revelation of the

Holy Ghost consists, and yet continue to base their faith on this supposed revelation, and call it

Christ's.

All the sectarians who acknowledge the revelation of the Holy Ghost, like the Mohammedans,

assume three revelations: the Mohammedans have Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed; the church

men have Moses, Jesus, and the Holy Ghost. But according to the Mohammedan religion

Mohammed is the last prophet, the one who explained the meaning of the revelations of Moses

and of Jesus, and he is the last revelation, which explains everything

which precedes, and every righteous believer has this revelation before him. It is not so with the

faith of the church: like the Mohammedan, it accepts three revelations, — that of Moses, of

Jesus, and of the Holy Ghost; but it does not call itself the Holy Ghost religion, from the name of

the last revelation, but affirms that the basis of its religion is Christ's teaching.

Thus they confess

one doctrine, and ascribe the authority of this doctrine to Christ.

The Holy Ghost sectarians, who recognize as the last revelation, — which explains everything

which precedes, — some Paul, others these or those councils, or the Popes, or the epistles of

the patriarchs, or the private revelations of the Holy Ghost, ought to say so and call their faith by

the name of him who had the last revelation, and if the last revelation is the fathers, or the

epistle of the Eastern patriarchs, or the decrees of the Popes, or the syllabus, or Luther's or

Filardt's catechism, they ought to say so and call their faith accordingly, for the last revelation,

which explains everything which precedes, will always be the chief revelation.

But they do not do so and, instead, preach doctrines which are foreign to Christ, affirming that

Christ preached these doctrines. Thus it turns out from their doctrine that Christ announced that

he redeemed with his blood the human race which fell through Adam; that God is a Trinity; that

the Holy Ghost descended on the apostles and passed through the laying on of hands to the

clergy; that seven sacraments are needed for salvation, etc. It turns out that all this is the

teaching of Christ, whereas there is not as much as a hint of all this in the

teaching of Jesus.

These false teachers ought to call their teaching and their faith the teaching and the faith of the

Holy Ghost, and not of Christ, for we can call Christ's faith only the faith which recognizes

Christ's revelation, which has come down to us in the gospels, as the last revelation,

even as they must recognize it according to Christ's words, Call no one teacher but Christ.

One would think that this is so simple that no mention ought to be made of it; but, strange to

say, up to the present men have not come to see this. Instead of directing all their attention to

separating Christ's teaching from all the artificial, unjustifiable harmonization with the Old

Testament, and with those arbitrary additions to his teaching, which have been made in the

name of the Holy Ghost, all the efforts are directed toward finding the greatest possible meaning

in this harmonization. And, strange to say, in this error two extreme camps meet: the camp of

the churchmen and of the freethinking historians of Christianity. The first, by calling Jesus the

second person of the Trinity, understand his teaching only in connection with the supposed

revelations of the third person, which they find in the Old Testament, in the epistles of the

councils, in the decrees of the fathers, and preach the strangest faiths, asserting that they are Christ's.

The second, who do not regard Jesus as God, understand the teaching in the same way, not as

it may have been preached by him, but as it is understood by Paul and the other interpreters.

While regarding Jesus as a man, and not as God, these interpreters deprive Jesus of the most

legitimate human right of being responsible for his own words, and not for those of his false

interpreters. While trying to explain the teaching of Jesus, these learned misinterpreters foist on

Jesus what he never had in his mind to say. The representatives of this school of interpreters,

beginning with the most popular among them, Renan, have not troubled themselves about

sifting out of Christ's teaching that which Christ himself taught, and not that which his

interpreters have lied about him; they have not tried to understand the teaching more profoundly

than the churchmen, but attempt to understand the meaning of the appearance of Jesus and of

the dis-

semination of his teaching from the events of his life and

the conditions of his time.

One would, however, think that the historians ought not to make this mistake.

The problem

which they ought to solve is like this: eighteen hundred years ago there appeared a poor man

who said so and so. He was flogged and hanged, and all forgot about him, as millions of similar

incidents have been forgotten, and for two hundred years the world did not hear anything about

him. But it turns out that some one had made a note of what he had said, and had told it to a

second and a third person. And so it went on, until billions of wise and foolish men, of the

learned and the unlearned, cannot get rid of the idea that this man, and no other, was God. How

is such a remarkable phenomenon to be explained ? The churchmen say that that was due to

the fact that Jesus was really God. If so, everything is intelligible. But if he was not God, how are

we to explain that this simple man was acknowledged by all to be God ?

The learned men of this school carefully investigate all the details of the conditions of this man's

life, without noticing that no matter how many details they may discover (in reality they have

discovered nothing but what is given in Josephus Flavius and in the gospels), no matter how

they may reconstruct Jesus' life down to the minutest details, and may find out what he ate and

where he slept, the question as to why he and no one else had such an influence on people still

remains without an answer. The answer is not this, in what circle Jesus lived, who educated

him, and so forth, and still less, what was going on in Rome, and that the people were

predisposed to superstitions, and so forth, but only in this, what this man preached that was so

peculiar as to cause people to separate him from all the others and to recognize him as God at

that time and even now.

One would think that if we want to understand this, the first thing which we must do is to try to

understand the teaching of this man, to understand, of course, his own teaching, and not those

coarse interpretations of his teachings which have been disseminated since his day. But this

they do not do. These learned historians of Christianity were so glad to find that Jesus was not

God, and they are so anxious to show that his teaching is not divine, and so not obligatory, that

they forget that the more they prove this, that he was a simple man and his teaching not divine,

the farther will they be from the comprehension of the question which interests them. They

strain all their powers to prove that he was a simple man and that, therefore, his teaching was

not divine. If we wish clearly to see this remarkable aberration, we need only think of Renan.

Havet naively affirms that Jfaus Christ n'avait rien de chrStien. And Souris proves with

enthusiasm that Christ was a coarse and stupid fellow.

The question is not to prove that Jesus was not God, and that, therefore, his teaching is not

divine, and not that he was not a Catholic, but to understand wherein the teaching consisted,

which has been so elevated and so dear to men that men have recognized the preacher of this

teaching to be God. It is this that I have tried to do, and have done, at least so far as I am

concerned. And this I offer now to my brethren.

If the reader belongs to the immense majority of cultured men, educated in the faith of the

church, who have rejected it on account of its incompatibility with sound reason and with

conscience (whether he has still left love and respect for the spirit of the Christian teaching, or,

according to the proverb, being furious at the fleas has chucked the fur coat into the stove, that

is, considers all Christianity a dangerous superstition), I beg such a reader to remember that

what repels him and presents

itself as a superstition is not Christ's teaching; that Christ cannot be blamed for

that monstrous

tradition which has been foisted on his teaching and has been given out as Christianity. We

must study only Christ's teaching, as it has reached us, that is, those words and actions which

are ascribed to Jesus, and which have a didactic significance.

Such a reader, in perusing my exposition, will find that Christianity is not a mixture of what is

profound with what is base, not a superstition, but, on the contrary, a very strict, pure, and

complete metaphysical and sesthetic teaching, above which human reason has not yet risen,

and in whose circle, though not conscious of it, all human activity is moving, whether political,

scientific, poetical, or philosophic.

If the reader belongs to that insignificant minority of cultured men who keep the church faith,

confessing it, not for external reasons, but for the sake of inward peace, I beg such a reader,

before reading this, to decide in his soul the question as to what is dearer to him, spiritual

peace, or truth. If it is peace, I ask him not to read this, but if it is truth, I beg him to remember

that Christ's teaching, as expounded here, in spite of the sameness of name, is an entirely

different teaching, and that, therefore, the relation of him who confesses the

church faith to this

exposition is the same as the relation of a Mohammedan to the preaching of Christianity; that

the question for him is not whether the proposed teaching is in accord with his faith, or not, but

only what teaching is more in accord with his reason and his heart, his church teaching, or the

one teaching of Christ. The question for him is whether he wants to accept the new teaching, or

prefers to remain in his faith.

But if the reader belongs to those men who externally profess the church faith and who value it,

not because they believe in its truth, but from external considerations, because they consider

this profession and the preaching of it profitable for themselves, let him remember that, no

matter how many brethren of the faith they may have, no matter how strong they may be, on

what thrones they may seat themselves, by what high names they may call themselves, they

are not the accusers, but the accused, and not through me, but through Christ. Such readers

must remember that there is no need for them to prove anything; that they have long ago said

what they had to say; that if even they proved what they want to prove, they prove only what all

the hundreds of mutually excluding church creeds have proved long ago; that they must not

prove, but justify themselves. They must justify themselves for their blasphemy, by which they

have assimilated the teaching of Jesus the God to the teachings of Ezdra, of the councils, of a

Theophi-lactes, and have allowed themselves to interpret God's words wrongly and to change

them on the basis of men's words; to justify themselves for slandering God, by burdening Jesus

the God with all the superstition in their hearts and giving it out as the teaching of Jesus; to

justify themselves for their rascality, with which they concealed the teaching of God, who came

to give the good to the world and substituted for it their own Holy Ghost faith, and by this

substitution have deprived billions of people of the good which Christ brought to men, and,

instead of the peace and love, brought to them, have introduced into the world sects,

condemnations, and rascalities of every kind, covering them up with the name of Christ.

For these readers there are only two ways out: humble repentance and renunciation of their lie,

or prosecution of those who accuse them for what they have been doing.

If they do not renounce the lie, there is but one thing left for them to do: to persecute me, for

which I, finishing this writing, am prepared with joy and with fear for my weakness.

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xxiii. 2-8, 13, 15-16, 23, 28, 27, 30-31. Mark iii 28-29. Matt, xxiii. 37—38; xxiv. 1-4, 12, 14.

Chapter X.: Luke xi. 53-54. John xi. 47-48. Luke xix. 47—48. John xi. 49-50, 52-57, 7-10; xii. 2-

5, 8, 7, 12-14. Matt. xxi. 10-11. Mark xi. 15. John xii. 19. Mark xi. 18. John xii. 20-28, 31-32, 34-

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Mark. xv. 29-32. Luke xxiii. 39-43. Matt, xxvii. 46-48, 50. John xix. 28-30. Luke xxiii 46.

CONCLUSION

THE COMPREHENSION OF LIFE IS THE DOING OF GOOD

FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

The announcement of good by Jesus Christ is the announcement of the comprehension of life.

The comprehension of life is this, that the principle of life is the perfect good. And so the life of

man is just such perfect good. In order that we may attain this principle, we must understand

that the spirit of life in man came from this principle. Man, who did not exist before, was called to

life by this principle. This principle has given the good to man, and so the quality of this principle

is the good.

Not to deviate from the principle of his life, a man must keep the only, comprehensible quality of

this principle, — the beneficence of love. And so man's life must consist in the good, that is, in

doing good, in love, but good can be done to men only.

All the personal lusts do not correspond to the principle of the good, and so man must sacrifice

them and all his carnal life for the principle of beneficent love for his neighbours.

From the comprehension of life, as revealed by Jesus Christ, results the love of our neighbours.

There are two proofs of the truth of this comprehension: one is this, that if we do not recognize

it, the principle of life presents itself as a deceiver that gave to men an unsatis-

factory striving toward life and the good; the other is this, that man in his heart feels that love

and doing good to his neighbour is the one true, free, and eternal life.

Chap. I. 1, 2, 3. This is the announcement about the comprehension of life, wherein men have

communion with the Father of life, and so eternal life.

4. This is the announcement of good.

5. The comprehension of life consists in this, that God is life and the good, and that in life and

in the good there is no death or evil.

6. If we should say that we have united with God and live in evil and death, we should either

be deceived, or not be doing what we ought to.

7. Only if we live the life which he lives, do we unite with him.

Chap. II. 1. We have a teacher in this life in Jesus Christ the righteous.

2. He has delivered us and the whole world from untruth.

3. Hereby do we know the teaching of Jesus Christ, if we keep his commandments.

4. He who says that he knows the teaching of Jesus Christ, and does not keep his commandments, is a cheat, and the truth is not in him.

5. But he who keeps his commandments has the love of God. Through the love alone do we

know that we are united with God.

6. He who says that he is united with Jesus Christ

must live as Jesus lived.

9, 10, 11. He who says that he is in the life and the good, and hates his living brother, is not in

the life and the good, but in death and evil, and does not know himself what he is doing; and

blind is he who hates the life which is in him.

15. In order that one may not be blind, one must remember that everything of the world is a

lust of the flesh or vanity, and all this is not of God;

16. That it passes away and dies;

17. But that he who does the will of God, love, abides for ever.

23. Only he who recognizes his spirit as the son of God unites with the Father.

24. And so keep that comprehension that according to the spirit you are the sons of God the

Father, and then you will have eternal life.

Chap. TTT. 1. God has given you the possibility of being his sons, and such as he is.

2. Thus we in this life become the sons of God. Though we do not know what we shall be, we

know that we are like him, and that we unite with him.

3. The hope in this eternal life frees man from error and makes him pure, even as the Father

is.

4. Whoever commits a sin acts contrary to the will of God.

5. Jesus Christ appeared to teach us the liberation from sin and the union with God.

6. And so he who has united with him can no longer sin. Only he who does not know him

commits sin.

7. And he who lives in God does righteousness.

8. He who has not united with God does not do righteousness.

9. Whoever acknowledges his birth from God cannot lie.

10. And so men are divided into those who are of God and those who are not: into those who

know the truth and love their brothers, and into those who do not know the truth and do not love

their brothers.

11. For according to the announcement of Jesus Christ we cannot help but love our brothers.

14. From the announcement of Jesus Christ we know

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that we pass from death to life, for we love our brothers, and that he who does not love a

brother is in death.

15. We know that he who does not love his brother does not love life. And he who does not

love life cannot have life.

16. From his announcement we know love to be this, that life is given to us, and so we know

that we must lay down our life for a brother.

17. So that if a man who has life and sees that his brother is in need, and does not lay down his

life for his brother, the love of God is not in him.

19. And he who loves thus has a peaceful heart, for he is united with God.

20. If his heart struggles he subdues his heart to God.

21. For God is more important than the desires of the heart. But if the heart does not struggle,

he is blessed.

22. For he does everything he can, the very best he can, and he does what he is commanded

to do.

23. But he is commanded to believe that he is the son of God, and to love his brother.

Chap. IY. 4. Those who act so unite with God and become higher than the world, for what is in

them is greater and more important than the whole world.

7. And so we shall love one another. Love is of God, and every one who loves is a son of God,

and knows God.

6. And he who does not love, does not know God, for God is love.

9. That God is love we know from this, that he sent his spirit, such as he himself is, into the

world, and gave us life through it.

10. We were not, and God did not need us, but he gave us life, the good, consequently he

loves us.

12. No one can know God. What we can know of him is that he loves us and through this love

gave us life.

11. And so, to be in communion with God, we must

be the same as he, and do the same that he is doing, that is, love men.

12. If we love one another, God is in us, and we in him.

16. Understanding God's love to us, we believe that God is love and that he who loves is

united with God.

17. And understanding this, we are not afraid of death, for we have become in this world like

God.

18. Our life has become love and is freed from fear and from all sufferings.

19. We love, because he loves.

20. And we must love, not God, whom we cannot love, because no man sees him, but the

brother, whom we can love. He who says that he loves God, and hates his brother, is deceiving,

for if he does not love his brother, whom he sees, how can he love God, whom he does not

see?

21. For we have the commandment to love God in our brother.

Chap. V. 3, 4. The love of God is, that we keep his commandments. His commandments are not

hard for him who, recognizing his birth from God, becomes above the world. Our faith rises

above the world. Our true faith is that which Jesus, the son of God, has taught us.

8. And the spirit is in us and confirms us in the truth of his teaching.

9. If we shall believe in what men affirm, how, then, can we fail to believe in the spirit which is

in us ?

10. He who believes that the spirit of life in him is a spirit that has come down from above, has

satisfaction in himself. But he who does not believe that life is a spirit that has come down from

above, from the Father, makes God a deceiver.

11. The spirit confirms that the life in us is the eternal life.

12. He who believes that this spirit is the son of the eternal spirit and like him, has eternal life.

14. He who believes in this has no obstacles in life and everything he wishes according to the

will of God is accomplished for him.

18. And so, he who believes that he is the son of God does not live in the lie and is pure from

evil

19. For he knows that the world is a deception.

20. That in himself (in man) there is understanding, so that he may find out that truth exists.

But the truth is that only the spirit, the son of the Father, exists.

THE END.